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ABSTRACT

Public financing for education and an array of other children's services has become a topic of significant political concern. This toolkit is intended to assist state and local leaders, who are charged with writing bills and formulating legislative strategies, to create state/community partnerships that will facilitate the development of comprehensive community support systems. Section 1 outlines the context and rationale for legislative reform; methods for developing legislative strategy; and the toolkit's purpose, contents and intended uses. Section 2 contains sample legislation for comprehensive, community-based support systems, including the following subsections: legislative findings and intent; definitions; strengthening community support systems; building state government collaboration; creating a state child and family fund; and overcoming institutional barriers to state and community support systems. Section 3 is a guide for tailoring legislation to the needs, priorities, and policy context of specific states and is organized to correspond to the sections of the sample legislation, with a rationale and overview for each section. Section 4 is a review and analysis of federal and state legislation for children and families, highlighting key similarities, differences, trends over time, and noteworthy features. Section 5 is a guide to references and sources for related topic areas presented. (SD)

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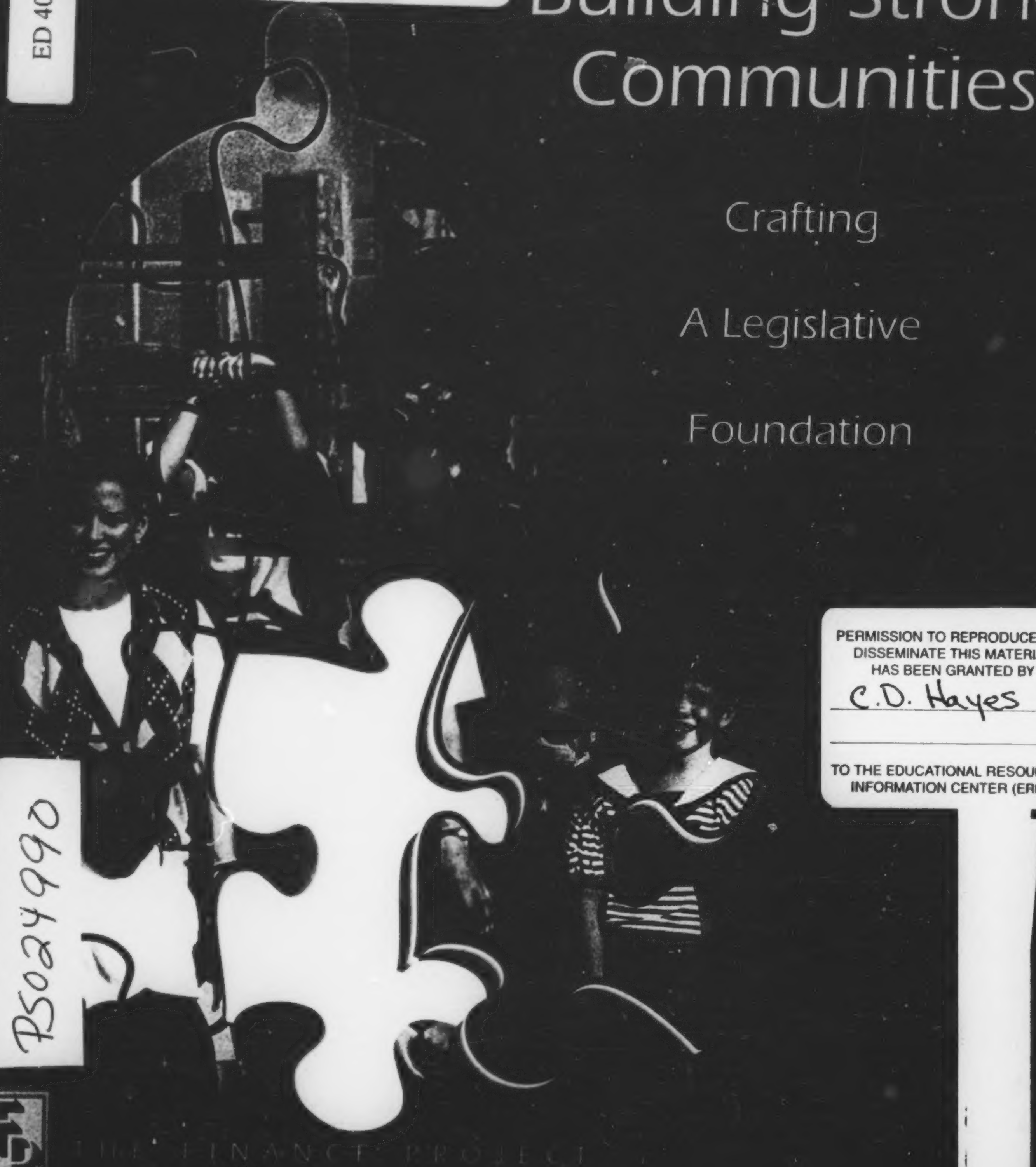

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December 1996

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Preface

PUBLIC FINANCING for education and an array of other children's services has become a topic of significant interest and political concern. Growing skepticism among a critical mass of American voters and taxpayers has fueled doubts about the ability of government to solve social problems and provide basic supports and services that enhance the quality of life in their communities. Many believe government is too big; it's too expensive; and it doesn't work very well. Despite steadily increasing public expenditures for health, education, welfare, human services, and public safety over the past two decades, seemingly intractable problems persist. Nearly a quarter of U.S. children are poor and live in families and communities that are unable to meet their basic needs. Schools have become increasingly expensive. But student achievement hasn't matched the rising costs, and drop-out rates remain unacceptably high. Health care costs continue to go up. Yet, many Americans can't get the services they need, and with each passing year their health care dollars buy less. Criminal justice demands a dramatically increasing share of public dollars—for police officers and judges and jails—but neighborhood streets aren't safer.

Voters have spoken clearly. They want more for their money. They have called for more and better services and a sharper focus on economic development and job creation, but they also have demanded balanced budgets and cuts in income and property taxes. In this time of big public deficits, they want government at all levels to operate more effectively and efficiently. They also want it to invest wisely and live within its means.

Across the country, there is mounting evidence of efforts to reform and restructure education, health care, and other community supports and services in order to improve the lives and future prospects of children and their families. Among the most promising of these are comprehensive, community initiatives that have fundamentally reoriented supports and services by creating infrastructures that link resources from many parts of the community. Though widely varied in their form and content, these initiatives are based on several basic premises: 1) that children and families have multiple needs that are best met in a comprehensive, coordinated manner; 2) that family and neighborhood influences shape individual outcomes; and 3) that responsibility for the design and operation of public programs and services should reside at the neighborhood or community level.

Comprehensive, community support systems have generated significant interest among policy makers, politicians, and public and private sector funders in recent years. Whether or not this interest will be sustained and whether successful initiatives will become models for more ambitious systemic reform depends to a large extent on their costs and benefits relative to more traditional categorical approaches to service delivery and community revitalization. It will also depend on the ability of state and local leaders to create the governance structures and marshal public funding to support activities that do not fit the narrow definitions and criteria of established categorical funding streams.

In the wake of federal welfare reform, these questions take on special importance. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 will consolidate numerous categorical public welfare programs and provide aid to states in the form of block grants. States will have much greater discretion to decide how services will be configured and how federal aid will be spent. Beyond funding programs to assist poor children and families, they are expected to place much more attention on workforce development and the creation of new jobs. In this context, many states will see welfare reform and the new flexibility it offers as an opportunity to advance their efforts to create more comprehensive, community support systems.

Critical to the success of these reform efforts, however, is state legislative action to present a vision of how current support systems will change and to establish the necessary governance structures and financing mechanisms that will make it happen. This toolkit is intended to assist state and local leaders who are writing bills and formulating legislative strategies to create state/community partnerships that will facilitate the development of comprehensive, community support systems.

The legislative toolkit is a product of The Finance Project's Working Group on Financing Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems, under the leadership of Judy Chynoweth. Over the past two years, this interdisciplinary development and design team has conducted an ambitious agenda of policy research and development activities to increase knowledge and produce policy tools to strengthen the capability of state and local governments to improve outcomes for children, families, and communities through more coordinated and collaborative services. Its analysis of the barriers to financing comprehensive, community support systems highlighted the extent to which statutory restrictions frequently overwhelm efforts to link schools, health care, and other social services, as well as the informal helping networks that are so important in the daily lives of children and families. While new state legislation to create state/community partnerships will not ensure the creation of effective community support systems, it can establish the necessary statutory foundation and climate conducive to reform.

This toolkit is the product of many people's contributions. Special thanks are due to all the members of the Working Group on Financing Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for their help in conceptualizing the project, giving it direction, and reviewing successive drafts of the sample legislation and the tailoring guide. Thanks are also due to all those who played a role in drafting the sections of the toolkit. Lynn R. DeLapp, a child and family policy consultant, took the lead in drafting the sample legislation and the tailoring guide. Thomas Woods, a graduate student at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, prepared a detailed review of existing federal and state legislation. A summary of findings from that study are included in the toolkit; the complete paper, including abstracts of more than 30 federal and state statutes, was produced as a part of The Finance Project's Working Papers Series. Cheryl D. Hayes, The Finance Project's Executive Director, prepared the introduction. Anna E. Danegger, Research Associate, prepared the annotated list of resources and managed the production of the entire toolkit. A preliminary draft of the sample legislation was shared widely with federal and state leaders, program developers, front-line service providers, educators, and children's advocates. We are enormously grateful to all these individuals for their thoughtful comments and suggestions. Their help was invaluable in crafting a final product that we hope will make the task of many state and local leaders across the country a bit easier.

Cheryl D. Hayes
Executive Director

About The Finance Project

THE FINANCE PROJECT is a national initiative to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of public financing for education and other children's services. With leadership and support from a consortium of private foundations, The Finance Project was established in 1994 as an independent, nonprofit organization. It undertakes an ambitious array of policy research and development activities, policy maker forums and public education activities, as well as support and technical assistance activities.

The work of The Finance Project is aimed at increasing knowledge and strengthening the capability of communities, states, and the federal government to implement promising strategies for generating necessary fiscal resources and improving the return on investments in children and their families. Its activities are intended to:

- Examine the ways in which governments at all levels finance public education and other supports and services for children (age 0-18) and their families;
- Identify and highlight structural and regulatory barriers that impede the effectiveness of programs, institutions, and services, as well as other public investments, aimed at promoting children's growth and development;
- Outline the characteristics of financing strategies and related structural and administrative arrangements that support improvements in education and other children's services;
- Identify promising approaches for implementing these financing strategies at the federal, state, and local levels and assess their costs, benefits, and feasibility;
- Highlight the necessary steps and cost requirements of converting to new financing strategies; and
- Strengthen intellectual, technical, and political capability to initiate major long-term reform and restructuring of public financing systems, as well as interim steps to overcome inefficiencies and inequities within current systems.

The Finance Project extends the work of many other organizations and blue-ribbon groups that have presented bold agendas for improving supports and services for children and families. It is creating the vision for a more rational approach to generating and investing public resources in education, other supports and services for children and families, and community development. It is developing ideas, options, and policy tools to actively foster positive change through broad-based systemic reform, as well as through more incremental steps to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of current systems. It also provides support and technical assistance to "reform ready" states and communities engaged in efforts to align their financing systems with their policy and program reform agendas.

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- Definitions;
- Strengthening Community Support Systems;
- Building State Government Collaboration to Support Communities: State Council for Children and Families;
- Creating a State Child and Family Fund; and
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Introduction

ACROSS THE country, state and local leaders are under growing pressure to improve their education, health care, and human services systems, and to make communities safer, better places for families to live and raise their children. In response, a number of states have initiated dramatic changes in the way supports and services are provided, and in the way they are financed. The hallmark of these reforms has been a shift toward greater local involvement in the design and delivery of services and greater local accountability for achieving improved results for children, families, and their communities.

In August 1996, Congress passed and the President signed legislation to overhaul the nation's welfare system. Experts and advocates will continue to debate the effects of the new law on poor children and their families. But few would disagree that it holds the potential to shake up a deeply entrenched and highly categorical system of public funding and service delivery. Welfare reform will also accelerate the shift in decision making authority to lower levels of government. The creation of block grants gives states a much larger role in the design and operation of programs to meet the needs of their low-income families.[1] In turn, many states are devolving more authority to counties and cities. The big question is whether the new law and the reductions in federal aid that are expected to accompany it will strengthen or overwhelm innovative efforts already underway in a number of states and communities to fundamentally reform their education, health care, and human services systems.

Community engagement is a strategy for improving supports and services; it is not an end in itself. Simply moving decisions downward is no guarantee that public investments will be more responsive to community needs and priorities. Creating community support systems that are comprehensive, family-centered, and that effectively draw on both informal helping networks and professionalized services requires better decisions, not just decisions that are made by different people.[2] The aim is to engage communities directly in planning and setting priorities, allocating resources, and maintaining accountability for achieving results. To do this, legislative action is needed to establish the statutory framework and climate for reform in which effective state/community partnerships can take shape and prosper.

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[1] Cheryl D. Hayes, *Rethinking Block Grants: Toward Improved Intergovernmental Financing for Education and Other Childrens Services* (Washington, DC: The Finance Project, April 1995).

[2] Center for the Study of Social Policy, "A Legislative Strategy to Support Local Governance." Draft background paper for the Changing Governance Strategies for Action Working Group. September 1996.

Legislation needs to:

- Articulate a new vision for comprehensive health and human services delivery;
- Create new collaborative state and local governance structures (or vest new authority in existing ones);
- Create a new flexible financing mechanism to provide start-up funds and, over time, to enable more decatigorized funding for community-based supports and services;
- Present a new approach to accountability that requires states and local communities to focus on to achieving desired results for children, families, and communities.
- Mandate a review of the adequacy of existing administrative and management systems and processes (e.g., management information, agency structure and personnel, training, procurement) and authorize investments in retooling.

A number of states have already enacted legislation as a foundation for creating and financing comprehensive, community support systems. In others, legislative and executive branch leaders are working on bills that will put into place the essential components of this kind of reform. Some have initiated dramatic approaches to systems change. Others have taken incremental steps, with a series of more modest legislative actions rather than one all-encompassing law. What is clear is that there is no single legislative formula or prescription that will fit the needs, priorities, and conditions of all states. Leaders in each jurisdiction will need to tailor statutes to take account of their own special circumstances.

Devolution: The Context for Reform

The shift toward a stronger local role in the design and delivery of supports and services for children and families is part of a larger movement to shift power and responsibility to lower levels of government. As several observers have noted, devolution in the domain of social welfare has several antecedents.[3]

The first is widespread recognition that many U.S. children and families are faring poorly. They are growing up unhealthy, uneducated, and unprepared for the responsibilities of work, family, and citizenship. Their families lack the economic, social, and emotional resources to care for them. Their neighborhoods are unsafe and unwelcoming places. While these problems are most pronounced for children and families living in some of the nation's large urban centers, they are not confined to any single geographic location or type of community. Nor are they limited to any single racial, ethnic, or economic group. And despite steadily rising public expenditures for health, education, and human services, as well as recent improvements in the national economy, many of these problems have proved highly resistant to change.

Second, a significant portion of the American public does not believe that government policies, programs, and institutions to support and serve children and families work very well. Whether the focus is on schools, health care systems, child welfare, employment and training, housing and community development, or public safety, there is great skepticism about how much government can really do to solve persistent social problems.

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[3] Ibid.; Cheryl D. Hayes, *Rethinking Block Grants*... Op. Cit.

Third, there is a pervasive belief that local leaders know best what is needed in their communities and could achieve better results if they had more control over programs and budgets. Highly categorical programs and funding streams do not accommodate the kinds of variation and customized approaches that local leaders often want. They are organized to provide standardized responses. They make it difficult to coordinate assistance to children and families whose needs do not easily fit narrowly-defined eligibility criteria. Moreover, they rarely build on the informal helping networks that are important resources in most communities.

Finally, state officials who are under pressure to solve complex social problems with fewer public dollars are looking for partners outside their own agencies and programs. More and more, they recognize that some goals, such as increasing family self-sufficiency, reducing teenage pregnancy, and enhancing school readiness cannot be achieved by the actions and investments of a single agency or program. They require mobilizing resources across several agencies and programs and linking them effectively. As a consequence, many state officials are more eager than they have traditionally been to collaborate with colleagues in other agencies and with leaders in local communities.

Taken together, these factors have contributed to a growing consensus: improving results for children, families, and communities requires engaging communities themselves much more directly in decisions about how public dollars are invested, who benefits, and how supports and services are organized and delivered. Linking multiple programs and services to help address children's and families' needs is most effectively done at the community level. Drawing upon the informal helping networks that exist among families, friends, and community groups is more easily accomplished in neighborhoods than in state agencies.

Yet, as several observers have noted, local decision making is only one key element of reform efforts aimed at creating more comprehensive, community support systems. Developing a stronger focus on achieving agreed-upon results is also important. So is establishing more flexible financing systems and strategies that link funding to results. Moreover, a commitment to improving the quality of services and ensuring that they are connected, individualized, and family-focused is essential to building more effective and efficient support systems.[4]

Perhaps the greatest challenge for reform-minded leaders, however, is redefining the roles and responsibilities of state and local governments in providing and paying for services. Education has a long history of local governance and financing. In contrast, health care and human services have traditionally been dominated by federal- and state-funded and directed programs. Efforts to effectively link schools, health care providers, child protection, and family support services, as well as informal helping

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[4] Center for the Study of Social Policy, "A Legislative Strategy..." Op. Cit.; Mark Friedman, *A Strategy Map for Results-based Budgeting: Moving from Theory to Practice* (Washington, DC: The Finance Project, September 1996).

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networks, will require sorting out these complicated intergovernmental jurisdictions and developing more collaborative approaches to community engagement and oversight. As the Center for the Study of Social Policy noted:

> "While this complicates the task of local governance, it is central to its promise of success. If the process of establishing local governance can increase agreement among state and local governments on the results they want for families and children, and on their respective responsibilities for achieving results, it will have accomplished a lot."[5]

Why States Need New Legislation

Whether or not they have begun to shape a reform agenda, most states will need new authorizing legislation to enable them to spend federal funds they receive through the welfare block grants.[6] In contrast to traditional categorical program grants, block grants consolidate a number of categorical funding streams and provide aid in the form of lump sum payments with many fewer conditions on how funds are used.[7] As a consequence, states will need new statutes to delineate how federal funds will be allocated among agencies and programs and who will have the authority to decide.

Some state leaders will undoubtedly conclude that the best course of action is to continue to serve low-income children and families as they currently do—albeit less well with less money when there is an economic downturn and poverty increases. For states that have set a reform agenda, however, welfare reform may present an opportunity to expedite changes that the governor, his or her cabinet, and the state legislature are already pursuing. For other states, it may create an impetus to reexamine the effectiveness of current systems, initiate reforms that redefine state agency roles and responsibilities, and build more effective state/community partnerships.

Formulating an agenda for change is challenging. But making it happen is even more difficult. Deeply entrenched bureaucracies, rigidly categorical programs and funding streams, budgets that are based more on traditional funding patterns and political negotiations than on needs and effectiveness, and parochial, turf-conscious service professions all present impediments to reform.[8] Overcoming these barriers depends to a large extent on the ingenuity and hard work of committed policy makers, program developers, educators, service providers, and community leaders, as well as parents. In most cases, it also requires legislation that articulates the vision for a new community-based system, establishes new governance structures, creates a flexible financing mechanism, and authorizes investments in building the administrative and management capacity at the state and local level to make the new state/community partnerships work.

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[5] Center for the Study of Social Policy, "A Legislative Strategy..." Op.Cit., p. 6.

[6] Council of Governors' Policy Advisors, "Preparing for Block Grants and State Autonomy on Social Welfare Programs: A Survey of How the States are Planning for the *Devolution Revolution*" in *The States Forge Ahead Despite the Federal Impasse* (Washington, DC: Council of Governors' Policy Advisors, February 1996).

[7] Cheryl D. Hayes, *Rethinking Block Grants...* Op. Cit.

[8] Martin E. Orland and Ellen Foley, *Beyond Decategorization: Defining Barriers and Potential Solutions to Creating Effective Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children and Families* (Washington, DC: The Finance Project, April 1996).

Across the country, there are a multitude of exciting community initiatives underway.[9] They represent creative efforts to address citizen needs, capitalize on community assets and resources, break down categorical barriers, and focus attention on the whole child, the whole family, and the whole community. Most thriving comprehensive, community initiatives can trace their success in large part to the heroic efforts of a visionary leader and at least one high-level government protector, who has helped them negotiate the shoals of rigid government bureaucracies and narrow categorical funding streams. All too often, however, local initiatives that are begun with great enthusiasm, founder when their own charismatic leaders are gone, their champions in the state legislature or the governor's staff move on, and the structural hurdles become just too much to overcome.[10]

Depending on the particular history and circumstances of the state, legislation can foster reforms in several ways. In some states, it presents a way of institutionalizing new ways of doing business that have developed quietly over several years, through the creative efforts of policy makers and local program developers. In others, it can add momentum to a process of change that has begun and is building steam. In still others, it can be the clarion call around which consensus about the need for change and the directions for reform can be formed. As the Center for the Study of Social Policy suggests, "In order for the '*new* way of doing business' to become '*the* way of doing business,' it must be backed by a clear public mandate and by the authority that comes with such a mandate."[11]

Developing a Legislative Strategy

There is no set formula for writing a bill or developing a legislative strategy to support the creation of comprehensive, community support systems. The statutory language and approach will vary depending on a state's political traditions, legislative history, constitutional constraints, and professional service culture. Nevertheless, there are several general principles that should guide state and local leaders who are engaged in the process of crafting and enacting legislation for this purpose.[12]

First, although leaders in some states may follow Nebraska's example and enact a single piece of legislation that mandates very wide-ranging systems reform, experience suggests that most take a more incremental approach to change. The elements of a new system are put in place over time in a series of statutes and amendments to existing health, education, and human service authorizations.

Second, legislation to create effective state/community partnerships presents the broad dimesnions of of a new system. It does not prescribe exactly how the law will operate in each community. Legislation to create new categorical service programs specifies in detail the rules and regulations governing the programs. Yet statutes to establish a legislative foundation for new community-based supports and services should create the necessary governance structures and financing authority, leaving it to local leaders to determine how the decision making process will work and how supports and services will be configured.

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[9] Cheryl D. Hayes, Elise Lipoff, and Anna E. Danegger, *Compendium of Comprehensive, Community-based Initiatives: A Look at Costs, Benefits, and Financing Strategies* (Washington, DC: The Finance Project, July 1995).

[10] Martin E. Orland and Ellen Foley, *Beyond Decategorization*... Op Cit.

[11] Center for the Study of Social Policy, "A Legislative Strategy..." Op Cit., p. 6.

[12] The Center for the Study of Social Policy provides a good discussion of these principles, "Legislative Strategy..." Op. Cit.

Third, legislation to create state/community partnerships usually affects the operations of a number of state and local agencies and service programs, and it crosses the jurisdictions of several legislative committees. To proceed smoothly, it must attract champions in several places—including both the state executive branch and the legislature.

Finally, unlike legislation to create a new categorical program, legislation to establish a statutory foundation for state/community partnerships is likely to evolve over time as a new system takes shape and as the distribution of program responsibilities, planning and budgeting authority, and accountability for achieving results is adjusted and readjusted. As the Center for the Study of Social Policy has noted, states might first write legislation to encourage innovation and authorize local pilot initiatives. As these new models of decision making and financing are refined, second generation legislation could authorize their expansion throughout the state.[13] Demonstrating how systemic change works in a few communities can encourage more significant departures from traditional practice and provide a boost to taking model initiatives to scale.

In sum, legislation is intended to launch the change process and create the conditions to support reform without prescribing precisely how it will work in every community.

The Sample Legislation Toolkit

This toolkit is intended to assist state and local leaders who are engaged in crafting legislation to facilitate the creation of comprehensive, community support systems. It is also a useful tool for those who are trying to decide whether legislative action is needed to advance their efforts to improve supports and services for children and families in their communities. It presents sample state legislation and a guide for tailoring bills to fit states' particular needs and conditions. It also provides a review of other existing state legislative initiatives and a list of other relevant resources.

Sample legislation. The sample legislation offers a vision, written in statutory language, of a new way of supporting the needs of children and families. In a composite bill, it presents a framework for reform and the several legislative components that are needed to create state/community partnerships. It is not intended as a prescription or a "standardized" approach to building community support systems. Instead, it offers a menu of essential elements that may be enacted in this form or some variation, singly or as a package. We expect that as policy makers proceed, they will see the sample legislation as a place to begin, and will adapt it to reflect their states' own circumstances and preferences.

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[13] Ibid.

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Tailoring guide. The tailoring guide, which accompanies the model legislation, is intended to assist state and local leaders in adapting the components of the sample legislation. It is organized so that each section of the guide cross-walks to the sections of the sample bill. It highlights issues that are raised in the legislative language and, in many cases, offers alternatives to suit the conditions of states with different political cultures, legislative histories, and constitutional constraints. Throughout the guide are examples of how these issues have been addressed in practice.

Legislative review. The review of legislative examples examines a number of existing pieces of federal and state legislation that are aimed at accomplishing all or part of what is presented in the sample legislation. It provides useful background for state and local leaders who want to take account of the legislative experiences of other states and the Congress as they have tackled this task.

Additional resources. This list provides an annotated bibliography of other sources of information and insight that may help state and local leaders as they set the directions for change in their own states and craft a legislative vehicle and strategy for accomplishing them.

Conclusion

The approach to providing and financing supports for children and families envisioned in this sample legislation is very different than the traditional top-down categorical system that has been in place for several decades. It is premised on a belief that over the long-run, fragmented, standardized services administered by state agencies will not solve many of the complex problems that threaten children, families, and the communities in which they live. What is needed is much greater community involvement in the design and delivery of services and in decisions about how limited public resources will be allocated. States and communities must be partners. Support systems must be comprehensive, community-based, family-centered, and they must link both the formal services and informal helping networks that are so important in the daily lives of children and families. Across the country, there are plenty of promising models that embody these characteristics. But without fundamental changes in the governance, financing, and administrative systems that underlie public programs, these initiatives will never be more than promising models.

Achieving better results for children, families, and communities ultimately requires doing business differently. Enacting state legislation that creates the foundation on which this change can take shape and flourish is one critical step in that direction.

Sample State Legislation: Creating a Statutory Framework for Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children and Families

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Lays out the purpose of the legislation and presents the rationale for a new approach to governance and financing for community supports and services.

Section 2. **Definitions** 2-5

Defines terms used in the sample legislation.

Section 3. **Strengthening Community Support Systems** 2-6

Describes key elements required for a community to legally participate in a state/community partnership for children, families, and communities.

Section 4. **Building State Government Collaboration to Support Communities: State Council for Children and Families** 2-10

Describes the roles and responsibilities of state government, and establishes the advisory commission on children and families to provide community input to the council.

Section 5. **Creating a State Child and Family Fund** 2-13

Describes a financing mechanism for raising revenue and providing start-up costs for new state and community councils, and for capacity building for the state/community partnership.

Section 6. **Overcoming Institutional Barriers to State/Community Support Systems** 2-14

Describes a collaborative state/community planning process intended to identify and overcome institutional obstacles to the new systems.

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Sample State Legislation: Creating a Statutory Framework for Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children and Families

Overview

THIS SAMPLE state legislation outlines a new approach to meeting the needs of children and families—through state/community partnerships. It presents the basic statutory ingredients for building comprehensive, community support systems. Yet it is not a "model" bill. Because states differ widely—in size, demography, wealth, economic strength, political context, legislative history, and traditions for investing in children, families, and communities—there is no standardized legislative approach that will be appropriate nationwide. Instead, this sample legislation presents a menu of individual components essential to create the statutory foundation for more flexible, family-centered community supports and services. It:

- Articulates a new vision for comprehensive health and human services delivery;
- Creates new collaborative state and local governance structures;
- Creates a new flexible financing mechanism to provide start-up funds and, over time, to enable more decatigorized funding for community-based supports and services;
- Presents a new approach to accountability that requires states and local communities to focus on to achieving desired results for children, families, and communities.
- Mandates a review of the adequacy of existing administrative and management systems and processes (e.g., management information, agency structure and personnel, training, procurement) and authorize investments in retooling.

Many of these legislative elements have been enacted and successfully implemented in a number of states, separately or in combination. Others represent ideas that are still being developed and refined. As political leaders and policy makers pursue their own change agendas, this sample legislative language provides a place to begin in crafting a bill that fits the special needs, conditions, and priorities of their states.

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BILL NO. ________

An Act to promote healthier, better educated, more self-sufficient children, families, and communities through creation of a partnership for children and families.

Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent

(a) The legislature finds that:

(1) A large and growing number of children in (state name) are affected by a range of factors in their communities that increase their risk of academic failure and compromise their ability to become productive, healthy, well-educated adults. Unsafe living conditions, abuse and neglect, family and youth violence, drug and alcohol addiction, deteriorating neighborhoods and rural communities, inadequate health care, lack of child care, teenage parenthood, poor nutrition, unemployment, and schools ill-equipped to handle changing communities, adversely affect family relationships, communities, and the ability of children to learn and grow. Currently, . . . (put state statistics here).

(2) Meeting the needs of children and families affected by these conditions imposes heavy costs on all citizens of the state by requiring costly special services, income assistance, and all too often, incarceration or institutionalization. These costs are a burden on the capacity of the state's economy to produce sufficient revenues and an adequate tax base.

(3) The current federal and state service delivery system for children and families, based on a multitude of separate funding streams and uncoordinated, narrowly targeted categorical programs, fails to address the broader needs of the child, family, and community. The current overregulated system emphasizes short-term crisis management over prevention or long-term solutions, and fails to adequately evaluate the results of programs for families and communities.

(4) Communities are best situated to address the diverse needs of children and families. Traditionally, communities have supported children and families through interconnected sys-

tems of family, neighborhood, religious, and other networks, as well as through formal institutions such as schools, health, and social services. In some areas, however, stress, mobility, and social isolation have weakened the sense of community. Residents of communities with eroded community supports generally have fewer employment opportunities, a poorer education system, higher levels of criminal activity, and more difficult lives. The state has a responsibility to support communities in efforts to strengthen and re-build support systems.

(5) Comprehensive, community-based child and family support systems being developed throughout the United States show great promise for improving the lives of children and families through establishing community goals and expectations for results, and designing strategies to achieve the results. Community goals typically include: healthy births and healthy families; readiness for school; school success; strong and stable families; readiness to work; safe and secure communities; and economic self-sufficiency.

(6) Community support systems are:

(A) Committed to community involvement and self-determination, and responsive to local needs and priorities.

(B) Comprehensive and flexible, integrating an array of informal supports; educational, health, and human services; and community and economic development activities to meet the broad needs of children, families, and communities. Greater flexibility in the use of funds is balanced with accountability for results.

(C) Community based, building on family and community strengths to invest in healthy children, strong families, and safe communities.

(D) Family centered, recognizing that the role of agencies is to support children and families.

(E) Focused on preventive and community-building activities, rather than emphasizing crisis management or acute care services.

(F) Accessible to families, often providing a single point of access or a "one-stop" service center within their neighborhoods.

(G) Collaborative—with governance and resource decisions, responsibility, and risk—shared among government, the private sector, neighborhood associations, and community members.

(H) Fiscally prudent, committed to using limited resources wisely.

(7) The legislature finds that these new systems are most successful when state government:

(A) Works in partnership with communities to define common goals, expected results, and benchmarks for children and families, and share the responsibility and risks for achieving these results;

(B) Joins with communities in building capacity to accomplish shared results; and

(C) Reforms state accountability, data collection, and administrative systems to support community efforts and meet the common goals.

(b) It is the intent of the legislature to establish the partnership for children and families to improve the lives of children and families through building and strengthening comprehensive, community-based family and child support systems. The partnership shall have four components:

(1) Community-based comprehensive support systems, governed by a community council.

(2) A state council for children and families, responsible for development of a state-wide results-based accountability system, coordination of state resources to support communities, and oversight of community support systems.

(3) A state fund for children and families to finance start-up costs and infrastructure for community support systems.

(4) A plan for overcoming institutional barriers to state/community support systems.

Section 2. Definitions

(a) "State council" means the state council for children and families.

(b) "Community" means a group of people who typically reside in one locality and are subject to the same laws, share the same values, and live under the same general conditions.

(c) "Community council" means a council established to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate a community family and child support system.

(d) "Community contract" means an agreement entered into between the state and a local jurisdiction that authorizes the reallocation of some portion of existing resources from participating agencies to a specific community for purposes specified in the agreement.

(e) "Community support system" means interlinked public and private, formal and informal structures, resources, supports, and services that promote the healthy development and support the needs of children and families living in the community.

(f) "Jurisdiction" means a unit of local government, typically a county or city.

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Section 3. Strengthening Community Support Systems

(a) It is the intent of the legislature that communities be authorized to design and implement plans to meet identified goals for children and families. These plans, after negotiation with and approval by the state council, will become community contracts that permit communities to use federal, state, and local resources, both public and private, to meet their goals for children and families through formal and informal supports and services. It is the further intent of the legislature that state government work in partnership with communities to strengthen local capacity to identify community needs and assets, and to address them in ways appropriate to those individual communities.

(b) One or more local jurisdictions may establish a community council to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate a community family and child support system. At least one of the jurisdictions establishing the council must have general governmental responsibilities and legal authority to accept state or federal funds.

(c) The membership of the council shall be representative of the socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic populations of the community. The overall membership shall include a balance of community residents and leaders, local organizations providing supports and services to the community, and government agencies. Members shall be appointed for staggered terms. The council shall include, at a minimum, all of the following:

(1) Representatives of families living in the community.

(2) Representatives of local organizations, religious and secular, providing supports and services to the community.

(3) Representatives of the business and labor communities.

(4) Local government and school officials responsible for public programs, services, or funds included in the plan, appointed by their respective governing boards.

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(5) A member of the governing board of each local jurisdiction included in the plan.

(d) Each council shall develop a plan to strengthen community support systems for children and families. The plan shall include all of the following:

(1) A statement designating either the council, or one or more local jurisdictions participating in the council, as the entity legally responsible for:

(A) The distribution of state, local, and state-administered federal funds, to the extent permitted by federal law;

(B) The implementation of the plan; and

(C) Compliance with the community contract to be negotiated with the state council.

If the council chooses to assume these responsibilities, it must include a copy of agreement(s) with the local jurisdiction(s) outlining the specific responsibilities of the council and the local jurisdiction(s).

(2) A vision for the community, identifying goals, intended results, and priorities for supporting children and families.

(3) Identification of the population and geographic area of the community to be served by the support system.

(4) A description of specific needs to be addressed by the plan, as well as the amount and types of services and other supports available from public, private, not-for-profit, and community-based organizations. Any type of service or support for families and children may be included in the plan, including those provided by informal family, neighborhood, or religious organizations, as well as public institutional services for social and child welfare, mental and physical health, education, recreation, family self-sufficiency, early childhood or youth services, and crime and violence prevention.

(5) A description of the type and amount of all state, local government, and private funds proposed to be included in the community contract, and how these funds shall be used. Inclusion of any fund, public or private, must be approved by the governing body or individual legally responsible for its management.

(6) A description of federal funds that the council would like to include in the fund, if they are available through block grants or pass-throughs, or if waivers or changes in federal law could be obtained by the state.

(7) Proposed administrative, claiming, reporting, data collection, and procurement procedures that differ from current procedures.

(8) Provisions for sharing data among agencies and across levels of government, while respecting client confidentiality.

(9) A description of how proposed changes in eligibility, intake rules, and levels of services are projected to affect the current populations receiving services.

(10) A description of the resources or types of assistance, if any, needed from the state in order to carry out the provisions of the plan. If the community council requests start-up or capacity-building grant funding from the state child and family fund, the council shall describe how the community will share the resource burden through local financial support or in-kind contributions.

(11) An implementation strategy and timeline showing how the council proposes to implement its scheme.

(12) A description of an evaluation plan that meets the following requirements:

(A) It designates the entity(ies) responsible for the evaluation.

(B) It is based on community needs and identified goals, and is consistent with any established state-wide goals and expected results.

(C) It includes baseline data relevant to the plan's activities and services.

(D) It includes specific expected results and indicators for children and families to be achieved through strategies included in the plan, as well as performance measures for the results and indicators.

(E) It describes what measures have been taken to ensure that residents of the community with similar needs have access to equitable levels of service.

(F) It measures consumer satisfaction with services and supports provided by the child and family support system.

(e) The governing boards of each jurisdiction financially participating in, or significantly affected by, the plan shall approve both the jurisdiction's participation in the partnership, and the plan.

(f) Approval of a community plan by the state council for children and families shall constitute approval of a community contract between the state and the local council or jurisdiction(s) named in the plan. to carry out the provisions of the plan.

(g) To the extent that savings are realized as a result of the community contract, funds may be retained by the community. These funds shall be used solely to further the community's plan, and shall not supplant other funds for children and families.

(h) Upon approval of the community contract by the state council for children and families, each community council shall submit to the state council all of the following:

(1) An annual report showing how federal, state, and local funds included in the contract have been spent, and which alternative administrative eligibility, claiming, reporting, and procurement requirements have been adopted, as well as a status report indicating the extent to which the plan has been implemented.

(2) Interim evaluation reports describing progress toward goals and expected results outlined in the plan.

(3) A full evaluation of plan implementation, to be submitted no later than six months after the completion of the fifth year of implementation.

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Section 4. Building State Government Collaboration to Support Communities: State Council for Children and Families

(a) The state council for children and families is established in state law to develop and maintain community and state support systems that improve the lives of children and families, and to develop state-wide goals for children and families. The state council, which shall be chaired by the governor or his or her designee, shall also be responsible for strengthening coordination and collaboration among state agencies responsible for services to children and their families, and for coordinating state resources supporting community efforts.

(b) Members of the council shall include state officials responsible for education, public safety, health and welfare, economic and community development, employment, housing, transportation, state administration and finance, and others appointed by the governor. In addition, one member of each chamber of the legislature, appointed by their respective houses, shall serve in an advisory capacity. The governor may designate a lead agency to coordinate the activities of the council.

(c) The state council shall have the following duties and responsibilities, which shall be carried out either by staff to the council or by state agencies participating on the council:

(1) Recommend to the governor, other constitutional officers, and the legislature, a process and proposed budget for the development of a state-wide agenda for children and families that will include a statement of a vision, expected results or outcomes, priorities for actions aimed at strengthening families and communities, indicators, and performance measures that capture or reflect the contribution of public agencies toward meeting the desired results. This process shall be informed by a research effort to identify the current status of children and families on a wide range of factors. It must be a collaborative effort among state and local officials; the business community; education, including both the K-12 systems and universities; parents; and state, local, and community leaders, agencies, and organizations that support families.

(2) Develop a plan for state agencies to coordinate state programs and services for children and families, helping communities achieve the goals and results included in the state agenda and community plans.

(3) Recommend a process to develop a child and family budget for state and state-administered federal funds, to address the goals and achieve the expected results identified in the state-wide agenda for children and families.

(4) Evaluate, approve, and monitor community plans. Activities will include but not be limited to the following:

(A) Development of parameters and criteria for state-level review, negotiation and approval of plans submitted by community councils. In developing parameters and criteria, the state council shall establish guidelines and procedures for state agencies to establish minimum thresholds for state-funded services supporting children and families, and to facilitate alternative eligibility standards, the blending of funds, flexible program administration, and streamlined reporting, claiming, and audit requirements for community child and family support systems.

(B) Approval of community contracts for child and family support systems based on plans submitted by community councils. At a minimum, community plans that include alternative administrative procedures or blended funding must ensure that the needs of targeted populations are addressed in a fair and equitable way; families are ensured the minimum level of services specified by the state; standardized data is submitted; proposals conform with federal law; and specific results to be met by the plan are included. The state council shall not approve any contract containing provisions that waive or in any way negate enforcement of any constitutional right of an individual.

(C) Development of criteria and standards for contract revocation and renewal, which will be implemented if communities do not meet agreed-upon standards.

(D) Development and implementation of procedures to determine the amounts and geographic allocation of state and federal funds distributed to and within communities.

(E) Development and implementation of procedures to work collaboratively with communities, where appropriate, to obtain waivers of federal rules and regulations.

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(F) Monitoring program compliance of communities receiving state funds and technical assistance under this section.

(G) Evaluation of state and local efforts to administer and carry out community plans. Evaluations shall include assessment of program results and costs, as well as evidence that resources were used wisely and prudently. Implementation of a plan for a family and child support system shall be deemed successful if after five years, at a minimum, the results from the services and supports funded by the community child and family fund show improvement over baseline performance. If no improvement is evident, the state shall have the option of recommending corrective action up to and including non-renewal or revocation of the community contract.

(H) Allocation of funds for start-up or capacity-building incentive grants to community councils from the state child and family fund. A local match of X% in local public or private funds, or in-kind services, shall be required for all grants to community councils.

(5) Actively advocate with federal, state, and local governments to promote legislation and regulations that permit maximum state and local flexibility in implementing programs serving children and families.

(6) Report to the legislature on issues relating to children and families, and to state agencies, local communities, and the public on the activities and results of the partnership for children and families.

(d) A commission on children and families composed of private citizens representing local communities, and representatives of local governments, community councils, the business community, and organizations providing services and supports to children and families shall be appointed by the governor and legislature. The commission shall have an executive director and an office funded through the state child and family fund. The commission shall hold at least four public meetings annually, and shall be charged with providing input to the state council during policy deliberations, and with reviewing state council policy recommendations before they are released. The commission shall also provide an annual report of its activities to the governor and the legislature.

Section 5. Creating a State Child and Family Fund

(a) A state child and family fund is hereby established for the purposes of supporting communities in planning and implementing local plans for community support systems, and supporting state council activities.

(b) Starting July 1, 199X, the legislature shall re-allocate 0.X% of the combined state funds for all programs serving children and families to the child and family fund.

(c) All interest accruing from investment of monies in the state child and family fund shall be credited to the fund. The fund shall be audited annually.

(d) The state council shall allocate monies from the fund for the following purposes:

(1) To assist community councils with start-up or capacity-building activities included in approved community strategic plans. Funds shall be limited to $X per year, for no more than X years, and may be used to:

(A) Fund initial coordination of services, fill gaps in services, and ensure the availability of personnel or space for services and supports.

(B) Develop data collection and management information systems necessary to gather information and measure performance toward results included in community plans.

(C) Develop innovative multi-disciplinary education and training activities for individuals working in collaborative, integrated community support systems.

(D) Finance other technical assistance activities detailed in community plans.

(2) To support activities of the state council for children and families and the commission on children and families. Administrative support for the state council shall be limited to X% of total funds.

(3) To finance services and supports included in community plans and approved by the state council.

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Section 6. Overcoming Institutional Barriers to State/Community Support Systems

(a) The legislature finds that current systems of accountability, compliance, data collection, and professional and administrative development are tied closely to a structure of categorical programs and funding, and present barriers to the establishment and operation of community child and family support systems. It is the intent of the legislature that the state council and communities shall work collaboratively to develop new systems that are more responsive to a state/community partnership for children and families.

(b) The state council shall be responsible for developing and sending to the governor and the legislature by (date) a plan for addressing some of the critical barriers to the operation of comprehensive community support systems. The plan shall be developed collaboratively by state and local officials; the business and education communities; parents; and state, local, and community leaders, agencies, and organizations that support families. The plan shall contain procedures and timelines to implement the following activities:

(1) A review of state statutes and regulations concerning children and families, with the object of initiating a new approach to laws and regulation that focuses on accountability consistent with established results and performance measures.

(2) Development and implementation of a coordinated child, family, and community management information system. This system should, to the extent possible:

(A) Define standardized data elements to be collected from community support systems and programs serving children and families for purposes of eligibility determination, policy development, fiscal compliance, claiming, program management, and program evaluation.

(B) Minimize the amount of paperwork required of families who participate in publicly funded programs.

(C) Provide local jurisdictions and service providers with adequate data to operate their programs effectively, to measure results for children and families, to identify fiscal irregularities, and to provide required information to the federal government.

(D) Permit data to be shared among agencies providing services to children and families, while respecting the confidentiality of participants.

(3) Development of a state/community system to identify the need for, and provide, technical assistance or additional training to state and local administrators, professional practitioners, and community leaders working in comprehensive, community support systems.

(4) A review of state professional licensing and credentialing requirements to identify barriers to integrating services among professionals in educational, health, and human services, and recommend changes that will promote multi-disciplinary professional pre-service and in-service education and training.

A Guide for Tailoring the Sample Legislation to Your State

Contents

Each part of this tailoring guide corresponds to a section of the sample legislation (Tab 2). For each section, there is an overview followed by a discussion of key issues (which may or may not touch upon all subsections of that particular section).

Introduction 3-1

The introduction provides a general discussion of the purpose and key components of the sample legislation and tailoring guide, as well as an overview of comprehensive, community-based support systems. It outlines the benefits and limitations of the sample legislation and addresses the impact of federal welfare reform on legislation for community-based comprehensive support systems.

Section 1 3-7

Section 1 of the sample legislation, ***Legislative Findings and Intent***, describes why the legislation is needed and presents policy arguments underpinning the proposed solution. This section of the guide outlines methods for building a partnership for children and families (Section 1(a) and (b)).

Section 2 3-9

Section 2 of the sample legislation, **Definitions**, provides an explanation of some of the terms used in following sections. This section of the guide provides further detail on one particular concept correlated to the definition of "community" — what is a community and how does it differ from a locality?

Section 3 3-10

Section 3 of the sample legislation, **Strengthening Community Support Systems**, describes the elements required for a community to legally participate in a state/community partnership for children, families, and communities. This section of the guide outlines two of the most important issues that policymakers face in establishing community councils: delegation of power and authority, and membership (Sections 3(b), (c), and (d)(1)). It addresses the objectives, feasibility, and scope of community plans (Section 3(d)). And it outlines how the legislation can give communities both the flexibility and the incentives needed to try new approaches to service delivery (Sections 3(f) and (g)).

Section 4

3-17

Section 4 of the sample legislation, **Building State Government Collaboration to Support Communities: State Council for Children and Families,** describes the state government role in the partnership and creates a collaborative council and a citizens' advisory commission. This section of the guide focuses on: the role of state government in the state-community partnership; the leadership, membership, and staffing of state council (Sections 4(a) and (b)); the contents and purpose of statewide agenda for children and families (Section 4(c) (1)); state agency coordination (Section 4(c) (2)); the role of results-based budgeting in creating comprehensive supports and services for children and families (Section 4(c) (3)); the interaction of the state council with community support systems (Section 4(c) (4)); the responsibility of the state council in advocacy and communication; and the purpose of a commission on children and families (Section 4(d)).

Section 5

3-27

Section 5 of the sample legislation, **Creating a State Child and Family Fund,** offers a mechanism for raising revenue and financing both community and state start-up costs and capacity building for the partnership. This section of the guide provides more detailed discussion of the uses, rationale, and political perils of a child and family fund; and methods for its establishment (Section 5(b)).

Section 6

3-32

Section 6 of the sample legislation, **Overcoming Institutional Barriers to State/Community Support Systems,** describes a planning process intended to address institutional obstacles to the new systems. This section of the guide outlines the steps needed to overcome barriers including: reviewing statutes and regulations (Section 6(b) (1)); developing a coordinated child, family, and community management information system (Section 6(b) (2)); creating a technical assistance and training network (Section 6(b) (3)); and reviewing and redesigning professional education, licensing, and credentialing (Section 6(b) (4)).

Conclusion

3-36

This section of the guide offers a brief wrap-up of the purpose of the sample legislation and the current context of supports and services for children and families.

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A Guide for Tailoring the Sample Legislation to Your State

Introduction

Overview: The contents of this tailoring guide.

THE PURPOSE of this tailoring guide is to assist policy makers in adapting the sample legislation (Tab 2) to fit the needs, priorities, and conditions of their states. Each part of the guide corresponds to a section of the legislation, and includes an overview for the section, followed by a discussion of key issues. Where the key issues relate specifically to a subsection of the legislation, the subsection will be identified. However, the discussion sections of this guide do not directly touch upon all subsections of the legislation. Where appropriate, the guide discusses alternative approaches to the issues and provides references or brief examples of how the issues are being addressed in practice.

This guide and the sample legislation are not intended to be prescriptive. While they raise some of the key issues that states are likely to face as they develop their own comprehensive, community-based support systems for children and families, they do not prescribe any "right answers." States differ widely—in size, population, history, wealth, political context, economic strength, and traditions for serving children, families, and communities. Each of these factors will influence how policy makers approach legislation to create or expand child and family support systems. The sample legislation and this guide to tailoring the legislation offer one set of options, but each state must determine its own direction.

What is sample legislation?

The sample legislation for community-based comprehensive support systems for children and families offers a vision, written in statutory language, of a new way of supporting the needs of children and families. It lays out a framework for legislation to create a state/local partnership for children and families, including a statement of purpose, state and community governance structures, funding, accountability, and capacity building.

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- **Caring Communities,** a Missouri government initiative started in 1989, provides a continuum of preventive and early intervention programs for children attending six schools, and their families. The program is funded primarily through pooling redirected state funds from four agencies—mental health, social services, health, and education. Local communities may use these funds flexibly.

- **Healthy Start Support Services for Children,** established in 1991, is a California grant program to fund community-based, school-linked, integrated services for children and families in low-income neighborhoods. Administered by the Department of Education, Healthy Start has the goal of establishing a prevention-oriented system for identifying needs and delivering a wide range of services to low-income children and families with multiple educational, health, and social problems. Planning and operational grants are available to "collaboratives" composed of local governments, schools, parents, and community organizations.

- The state of **Nebraska** enacted legislation in 1996 to create a new health and human services system in the state. Five state agencies—the Departments on Aging, Health, Public Institutions, and Social Services, and the Office of Juvenile Services—will be abolished January 1, 1997, to be replaced by three new agencies—Health and Human Services Delivery, Health and Human Services Standards and Evaluation, and Health and Human Services Finance and Support. The new agencies will be designed to integrate services, financial support, and administration through state/community partnerships. A key focus of the restructured system will to be the development of a results-based accountability system. In addition, a Health and Human Services Policy Cabinet, consisting of the new agency directors, will be established to develop plans, prepare budgets, and establish consistent priorities and policies for allocation of resources. A Health and Human Services Partnership Council will gather community input and serve as a link between state agencies and local communities.

The intent of this sample legislation is to present a composite state-level bill that incorporates all of the basic components needed to create a state/community partnership for comprehensive support systems. It is not a "model" bill in the sense that it presents a standardized, "approved" approach to community support systems; no standard approach exists. Instead, the sample legislation contains a menu of individual components that have been successfully implemented by states or communities, but that may fit together in many different ways, on a variety of timelines. In order to adapt the sample legislation to reflect a state's particular governance structure and local circumstances, policy makers should thoughtfully select and adapt components of the legislation. These components should fit the state's vision, experience, and resources, and should not duplicate or confound the aspects of state/local partnerships that may already be in place.

Many policy makers may reasonably find the overall vision of fully developed state/community partnerships portrayed in the sample legislation to be overwhelming. If fully implemented over a short timespan, the legislation would require significant and possibly disruptive changes in how government interacts with and serves its citizens. Changes of the magnitude described in the legislation, however, do not happen overnight. It has taken 40 years for the categorical delivery system and its government apparatus to reach a point of virtual unmanageability and ineffectiveness. It will also take years to transform the system.

Perhaps the best approach to using this sample legislation as a tool to reshape the current service delivery system is to start with a vision—either the one presented here, or a state's own—of a new family and child support system based on partnership between state government and communities, and then to put the operational pieces in place over time.

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Along with the vision, a starting point might be the enactment of incentives for the development of community support systems, or creation of a comprehensive state policy office for children and families. Wherever a state may start, as one or two less controversial components of the system are successfully implemented, the state will learn what works, and discard what doesn't. With early success, additional components can be added.

Why are state and community partnerships to create support systems for children and families the focus of the sample legislation?

Over the last ten years, many federal, state, and local policy makers have come to recognize that federal- and state-directed programs aimed at children and families have, in many cases, failed to achieve healthier or better-educated children, safer neighborhoods, or more responsible parenting. Many policy makers now believe that local communities, using informal neighborhood supports as well as publicly supported services, may be more effective than the federal or state government in identifying and meeting the needs of their residents.

As alternatives to the current service delivery systems, diverse federal, state, and local initiatives have been established throughout the country. These efforts place responsibility on local communities for the design and provision of comprehensive support systems for children and families, and establish state-level structures to guide and support them. Overall, these initiatives integrate categorical services, focus on the strengths of families and communities, and base accountability on results. A few are described in the boxes.[1]

■ **Oregon Benchmarks** was initiated in 1988 to create a 20-year strategic plan for Oregon. Citizens from all over the state worked with the nine-member Progress Board, chaired by the Governor, to identify 259 benchmarks to measure progress toward three broad goals:

(1) Creation of a diversified and productive economy;
(2) Protection and enhancement of the quality of life; and
(3) Investment in the capability of the state's population.

The creation of benchmarks has led to reform in many areas, including the creation by the state's Commission on Children and Families of county-based commissions to develop strategies for measuring performance toward the benchmarks. Currently, at least seven of Oregon's 36 counties are building on the state framework, developing comprehensive, local benchmarks for their communities. In addition, a state performance-based budgeting system has been initiated to evaluate the effectiveness of state programs in meeting the benchmarks.

■ The **West Virginia Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families** was established in 1990 to foster more collaboration around child and family issues among state government agencies. Chaired by the governor, the cabinet is composed of the secretaries of Health and Human Resources, Commerce, Labor, and Environmental Resources and Administration, as well as the State Superintendent of Schools and the Attorney General. Legislative representatives serve in an advisory capacity. The Cabinet is responsible for the creation and operation of local Family Resource Networks to integrate supports and services for children and families.

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[1] Cheryl D. Hayes, Elise Lipoff, and Anna E. Danegger, *Compendium of Comprehensive, Community-based Initiatives* (Washington, DC The Finance Project, July 1995).

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All of these efforts show promise in demonstrating effective new ways to respond to the individual needs of communities and to provide flexible supports and services for children and families. As they move to expand beyond relatively small-scale demonstration projects, however, they are running into significant institutional obstacles, linked to the traditional categorical services system. These barriers include:

- Restrictive categorical federal and state funding, eligibility, and regulations;
- Federal, state, and local planning, budgeting, management, and accountability structures that are program-specific;
- Agency cultures that do not foster collaboration, cross-agency communication, or implementation of comprehensive systems;
- Inadequate, non-interactive management information systems;
- Lack of precision in defining results and connecting them to measurable indicators; and
- Specialized professional services that are not conducive to collaborative strategies.

Ultimately, the success of efforts such as those described previously in the example box will depend on the implementation of new public policies that replace the current categorical service delivery system. The sample legislation for community-based comprehensive support systems provides an approach to state statutes that will permit and even encourage state and local entities to develop and operate local governance structures. It will further enable the creation of more flexible funding arrangements for publicly supported services—arrangements that are not governed or financed through traditional categorical programs and funding structures.

What is included in each section of the sample legislation?

The sample legislation is divided into six sections:

☞ **Section 1:** ***Legislative Findings and Intent,*** lays out the purpose of the legislation. It describes the problem that the legislation is intended to address (why it is needed), and presents the policy arguments underpinning the proposed solution.

☞ **Section 2:** ***Definitions,*** defines terms used in the legislation.

☞ **Section 3:** ***Strengthening Community Support Systems,*** describes key elements required for a community to legally participate in a state/community partnership for children, families, and communities:

- A collaborative decision making body;
- A plan for developing comprehensive supports and services;
- The legal authority and resources needed to implement the plan; and
- Accountability measures for execution of the plan.

☞ **Section 4:** ***Building State Government Collaboration to Support Communities: State Council for Children and Families,*** lays out state government structures and roles in a partnership for children, families, and communities. It introduces the state council for children and families, and describes the role of state government in a state/community partnership as:

- To support community plans;
- To maintain overall responsibility for the well-being and equitable treatment of the state's children and families;
- To develop a statewide vision, goals, and results for children, families, and communities;
- To coordinate state government agencies that serve children, families, and communities; and
- To ensure prudent stewardship of state and federal funds.

It also establishes the advisory commission on children and families to provide community input to the council.

☞ **Section 5:** ***Creating a State Child and Family Fund,*** offers a mechanism for raising revenue and financing both community and state start-up costs, and capacity-building for the state/community partnership.

☞ **Section 6:** ***Overcoming Institutional Barriers to State/Community Support Systems,*** describes a collaborative state/community planning process intended to address institutional obstacles to the new systems. The plan will include:

- A review of laws and regulations that are incompatible with community support systems;
- Development of a comprehensive management information system; and
- Provision of technical assistance and training for administrators, educators, and human services professionals who work in collaborative community support systems.

What are the key components of the legislation and how do they fit together?

Together, the components of the legislation are intended to form a state/community system of services and supports. They are designed to interact in the following ways:

☞ **Community support systems,** which are the core elements of the state/community partnership, encompass interlinked public and private, and formal and informal, resources, services, and supports. They are governed by broad-based community councils responsible for identifying the needs of and desired results for the children and families in the community, and for carrying out a plan to attain the desired results.

☞ The **State Council,** an interagency policy body, develops guidelines for, and approves community plans. The council also coordinates allocation of statewide resources to support the activities of community support systems, and identifies and clears away unnecessary state-level institutional barriers to the new systems. It is responsible for establishing statewide thresholds for services for children and families, and works with communities to establish a results-based accountability system for the state and local communities.

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- The advisory **Commission on Children and Families** provides a broad community perspective on issues before the state council.

- The **State Child and Family Fund**, controlled by the state council, provides a source of non-categorical funds to initiate the partnership, and build state and local capacity to create and manage child and family support systems. It may also provide funds for non-categorical services.

What are the benefits and limitations of the sample legislation?

The sample legislation provides the necessary statutory framework for reforming financing and governance systems for comprehensive, community support systems. However, it is important to recognize the limits of state legislation. While necessary, the legislation itself is not sufficient for the development of new support systems. State law can only encompass those aspects of community support systems over which states have legal authority, including state funds, eligibility criteria, and administrative rules.

State law does not have the authority to change the large proportion of funds or the volumes of administrative rules governed by federal law. Moreover, in community-based support systems, local communities—not the state—retain the authority to decide how best to organize and provide services to their residents. Legislation can only provide authority and some incentives for communities and local jurisdictions to both try new ways to deliver supports and services, and to build the management infrastructure to support these reforms. Only in combination with community commitment, leadership, and collaboration will legislation be sufficient to bring about positive change.

How does federal welfare reform affect legislation for community-based comprehensive support systems?

The recent enactment by Congress of major federal welfare policy changes (effective October 1, 1996) provides states with an urgent and unprecedented opportunity to redesign their service delivery systems for children, families, and communities. With the removal of many federal restrictions on public assistance programs, states may discard elements of their current categorical welfare systems and structures, and design new systems responsive to the needs of their citizens.

In exploring their options for implementing federal policy changes, states may find that the sample legislation's partnership between coordinated state agencies and community-based support systems for children and families offers a useful model for creating new state systems that meet some of the imperatives of the new federal welfare policies. Comprehensive, community-based systems could effectively bring together many of the services needed to assist families in attaining and maintaining economic self-sufficiency, such as increased job creation and the provision of job training and child care. Moreover, faced with the prospect of capped federal funding coupled with increased demand for services, comprehensive support systems may provide a useful means for stretching limited resources.

Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent

Overview: The purpose of the section on legislative findings and intent.

THE DECLARATION of legislative findings and intent introduces and justifies a bill. Although in most cases, "intent" language is not codified as state statute, it can be a powerful tool to educate lawmakers about the issues to be addressed and the approach chosen for solving the problems. Later, it may be used by the courts and lawmakers to identify the author's purpose in carrying the bill. The sample legislation's intent language includes three items:

- A description of the problem to be addressed by the legislation;
- A justification for changing the current system; and
- A summary of proposed solutions, which will be explicated in the remainder of the legislation.

The use and length of a section on legislative findings and intent vary widely among legislators and among states. Some legislators use no intent language at all, preferring to educate fellow lawmakers in other ways. Others provide only a few lines on the purpose or description of the bill. We have chosen in the sample legislation to provide a long intent section, which can be shortened or completely omitted to meet the needs of specific legislators.

Building the case for a partnership. (Section 1(a))

Legislators typically are reluctant to overturn current systems and try something new. They also are unfamiliar with the concepts underlying community-based comprehensive support systems for children and families. The purpose of the legislative findings and intent section in the sample legislation is to build the argument that the current system is not working effectively, that children and families are facing increasingly intractable problems, and that a new way of providing services and supports is needed to address these problems. In developing the case for community-based support systems, the following pointers may be useful:

☞ To demonstrate the ineffectiveness of current programs serving children and families, **cite up-to-date data** on the conditions of children in the state, showing trends wherever possible. State-specific statistics on child health, educational achievement, foster care placement, community violence, juvenile incarceration, teen pregnancy rates, family dissolution, etc., can be found in each state's education, health, employment, and social services data, or through *Kids Count*, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.[2] If possible, include data showing that these problems not only hurt children, families, and communities, but cost the state millions of dollars in services and lost productivity.

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[2] *Kids Count* is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States. The list of state contacts is published annually in the *Kids Count Data Book*, and is available through the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 701 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202, telephone 410/547-6600.

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☞ **Provide a brief explanation** for why the current system is not working (see Section 1(a) (3) of the sample legislation). The sample legislation cites:
- The fragmentation and over-regulation inherent in the plethora of categorical programs;
- The system's emphasis on crisis intervention rather than long-term solutions; and
- The system's failure to measure program effectiveness by examining results.

☞ **Describe the basic principles** underlying community-based support systems (see Sections 1(a) (4), (5) and (6) of the sample legislation). To the extent possible, relate these principles to specific examples of promising collaborative community-based programs in the state, such as family preservation and family support, Title 1, family resource centers, etc.

☞ **List state responsibilities and actions needed** to implement a new system. Policy makers must know how the resources and programs they control will be changed by the bill (see Section 1(a) (7) of the sample legislation).

Establishing the partnership for children and families. (Section 1(b))

This section provides a succinct statement of the contents of the legislation. This type of brief statement is invaluable to legislators, committee staff, and other readers who are trying to quickly describe or analyze a bill.

Section 2. Definitions

Overview: The purpose and content of the definitions section.

A DEFINITIONS section of a bill is optional. Generally, it is used to define only those terms that might be unfamiliar, confusing to the reader, or used differently from common usage. In the sample legislation, we define only six terms. "State council," "community," "community council," and "jurisdiction," which are relatively generic terms, are given specific definitions pertinent to this legislation. The terms "community support system" and "community contract" introduce new concepts, described in greater detail in Section 3 of this guide.

What is a community and how does it differ from a locality?

Although a short definition of community is included in Section 2 of the sample legislation, it may be helpful to more fully describe how the term is used in this instance. This legislation borrows its concept of community from one of The Finance Project's internal working papers,[3] which in turn relies upon *Building Community*,[4] by John Gardner. As described by these monographs, communities take diverse forms. They offer:

- **A sense of common place,** frequently, but not necessarily, a geographically coherent residential community; the place may also be a neighborhood, a rural district, a town, a school, a church, or a community center;
- **A site for common activities** for work, worship, education, social activities, or other functions;
- Shared core **values, goals, and purposes;**
- **Toleration** of differences and celebration of diversity;
- An atmosphere of **cooperation and caring;**
- Open channels of **effective communication** among their members and between the community and the outside world;
- An emphasis on preserving their own **identity** while reaching out to play an effective role in the larger environment; and
- **Safe, secure environments that support the development of young people.**

Using these descriptors, "community," as used in the sample legislation, is broader than just a geographic locality. In addition to "place," it connotes interpersonal ties, associations, interests, and sentiments.

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[3] Cheryl D. Hayes, "Building Strong Communities: The Role of Comprehensive Support Systems and Implications for Financing," Internal working paper for The Finance Project, July 1995.

[4] John W. Gardner, *Building Community* (Washington, DC: Independent Sector, 1991).

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Section 3. Strengthening Community Support Systems

Overview: The purpose and content of the section on community support systems.

THIS SECTION of the sample legislation defines community support systems and describes the elements required to legally establish community support systems authorized to offer state-funded services. They include:

- **Establishment of representative councils to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate support systems;**
- **Development of community plans based on specific criteria; and**
- **Execution of community contracts negotiated between a community council or local jurisdiction, and state government, which provides the legal authority to enact the plan and spend public dollars.**

The importance of community support systems.

Based on the assumption that communities[5] are best situated to identify and meet the needs of their residents, community support systems comprise the core element of state/community partnerships for children and families. Support systems encompass a variety of formal and informal structures, resources, supports, and services, ranging from networks of family and friends to community and religious organizations, the business sector, and public services and institutions. To the extent that these resources and services can be intentionally and purposefully linked together to support families and communities at a very local level, families and communities may be strengthened and more children will grow up to be healthy and productive citizens.

Delegation of power and authority: Establishing community councils. (Sections 3(b) and 3(d) (1))

Some of the most difficult issues with which policy makers must grapple in establishing community councils are those concerned with the delegation of governmental power and authority. Currently, most governmental authority is held either by general government entities such as cities and counties, which administer a broad range of programs in limited geographic areas, or by special districts (i.e., schools, transportation, water), with narrowly defined authority. Some states (including California, Virginia, and Wisconsin) delegate significant authority to county governments that act as direct agents of the state to administer state programs. Other states directly administer state-funded programs. Community-based support systems raise a set of new questions regarding governmental authority.

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[5] See definition of "community" in Section 2 of this guide.

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Which entities should establish community councils and approve community plans?

The answer to this question will depend largely on which services and supports are expected to be included in community plans, and which local jurisdictions are currently responsible for their administration. Common sense would dictate that jurisdictions that currently provide key services to children and families, and that would be significantly affected by a community plan, should be involved in creating the community council and approving community plans. In fact, the involvement and support of these jurisdictions over time may be critical to the success of the community support system. In states where counties act as agents of state government in the administration of most health, human services, and judicial activities, county government must be included, as well as school districts. Other local jurisdictions, such as cities and special districts responsible for child and family services, should also be involved.

What is the appropriate role for a community council? How much authority should the council be given?

In crafting state legislation on community-based support systems, policy makers must define the role of the community council, and decide the extent of the council's authority. Various options are available. They include:

- **Planning and oversight.** One option is to invest the council with a planning and oversight role. The community council would be responsible for developing, monitoring, and evaluating a community plan, but would delegate the authority to administer specific programs and spend public funds to one or more local jurisdictions, such as a county or school district (or, if appropriate, a state agency). Under this option, the implementing jurisdiction(s) would contract with the state council to administer the community plan, subject to formal agreements with the community council. There would be no need to create alternative legal spending authority or administrative mechanisms for the community council.

  Politically, planning and oversight organizations may be seen as weak, subject to the power and authority of the organization(s) holding the purse strings. In practice, however, the depth of commitment of the council's collaborative membership to the community plan and the community support system will determine its strength and ability to set and maintain the directions delineated in the community plan.

- **Implementation authority.** A second option is to give the community council authority to implement, as well as plan and oversee, the community plan. Legislation could give the council, in one of two ways, the authority to directly administer programs and services included in the plan, and to spend public funds. The community council could be given the power to execute a community contract directly with the state council, completely bypassing agencies currently charged with program administration. Alternatively, the council could negotiate agreements with the local or state agencies to "pass-though" specific funds and responsibilities to the council.

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Implementation authority would confer substantial power on the community council, but also may require establishing legal and administrative mechanisms, such as joint powers agreements, to carry out the community plan. Politically, giving community councils implementation authority runs the risk of being characterized as building another layer of government in competition with existing agencies. However, increased autonomy of the council would not expand bureaucratic systems. Instead, it would allow greater freedom to create new, potentially more effective systems to serve the community, moving community-building away from top-down agency controlled activities to bottom-up activities, allowing local design and operation.

Selection and membership of community council. (Section 3(c))

How should the community council be selected?

There are various ways to select members of a community council. They include:

- ☞ **Appointments** by the jurisdiction(s) establishing the community council, with nominations from the various groups represented on the council. This process is relatively quick and inexpensive, but runs the risk of appointing members who are not committed to the concepts of community-based support systems.

- ☞ **Election** by the community to be represented by the council. If this option is chosen, procedures for the election should be included in the bill.

Should the council include public- or private-service providers who might influence decisions concerning services they provide?

Although the sample legislation includes providers, there are strong opinions on both sides of the inclusion issue, as well as different traditions in various states. Some argue that providers frequently have the best knowledge of the population to be served, and can offer experience and insight on how services can best be provided. It is claimed that potential conflicts of interest can be avoided by having council members declare possible conflicts of interest and excusing themselves from related votes. Others argue that any council with authority over funding decisions should categorically exclude providers, because they are unable to make objective decisions: experience and expertise can be provided by customers and policy makers. In practice, many councils include a balance of providers and non-providers, with a majority of non-providers.

Community plans. (Section 3(d))

The overall objectives of a community plan are to:

- Identify desired outcomes or results for children and families living in a specific community;
- Devise strategies for achieving those results;
- Identify the resources to be used—including public and private funds, formal services, and informal supports; and
- Determine whether the plan accomplished its objectives.

Should legislation restrict the breadth of plans?

The sample legislation is written to permit community councils to focus their efforts on virtually any set of results or outcomes pertaining to children and families, and to develop strategies of any size or scope to meet these results. Essentially, any state-supported service can be included in the plan; any funding stream aimed at children and families can be blended; and broad changes in program administration and eligibility can be identified. The breadth of services and administrative flexibility included in the legislation allows community councils to select whatever results best fit and are most important to their community. The breadth could also allow councils to develop far-reaching strategies that will significantly change service delivery, and permit broad-based support systems that target community results and support family and community empowerment.

What are the practical limitations to plans?

While the breadth of the sample legislation allows community councils to undertake wide-ranging reforms, one should not assume that the broad scope will necessarily lead to broad-based community plans. So far at least, experience with broad enabling legislation in California and elsewhere has shown far more limited results, due to a variety of factors:

- ☞ **Federal and state restrictions.** Federal regulations and match requirements that restrict the use of state funds may preclude the ability to significantly blend funding or change eligibility and administrative requirements. Unless and until federal programs and funding requirements are changed by block grants or broader waiver authority, local and state flexibility will be limited. Similarly, a plethora of state rules and practices must be changed before full-scale community support systems can be accommodated by state government structures.

- ☞ **Difficulties inherent in collaborative agreements.** Broadly inclusive plans are the result of broad agreements among agencies that administer funds under well-understood rules. Particularly in the early stages of building community councils and community plans, it is very difficult to reach agreements on spending scarce resources in new and different ways, especially when accountability and compliance rules are in the process of being changed. Most councils start with very limited changes—often only involving "new money"—for only a few services addressing well-defined, limited populations. These councils plan to expand their plans and services gradually, contingent on success with their limited first steps.

☞ **Limited experience.** Expertise is developed over time. Currently, most policy makers and administrators have relatively little experience with creating new and comprehensive funding, administration, and service systems. Moreover, few communities have resources to devote to the creation of large new systems. Most communities decide to start small.

Limiting the scope of community plans.

An alternate approach to a broad-based statute is to limit the focus of community plans and state support by requiring a community to focus on specific populations, or by limiting a community to its choice of one or more broad outcomes. This more limited approach permits state agencies to concentrate efforts around a few areas of statewide concern, rather than attempting to respond to multiple communities with a wide range of needs. For example, North Carolina's Smart Start initiative aims specifically at improving the health, education, and well-being of children under the age of six, and Washington's Community Public Health and Safety Networks targets youth. Iowa's de-categorization program focuses on reducing out-of-home placement for children and youth.

How legislation can give communities flexibility to try new approaches to service delivery. (Flexibility through community contracts.) (Section 3(f))

A key function of legislation creating state/community support systems is to permit communities to experiment with programs, standards, funding rules, eligibility criteria, and administrative procedures that differ from current state law. Several statutory options to give communities this flexibility are available:

☞ **"Notwithstanding" language.** This language, frequently used in bills and statutes, allows exceptions to specific or broad existing statutes. California's Assembly Bill 1741 creating the Youth Pilot Program, for example, used "notwithstanding" language very broadly to allow six counties to blend funds and change administrative restrictions. However, the mechanism did not work; state agencies found the language to be overly vague, potentially subjecting them to court challenge on any change made to existing statutes. As a result, the statute was later amended to permit greater use of state waivers.

☞ **Waiver procedures.** To the extent that existing statutes permit waivers, waiver procedures can be developed to permit communities to request exceptions to regulations, rules, or statutes. However, waiver processes are limited (for the most part) to rules and regulations, rather than statutes. For example, West Virginia's Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families has broad authority to waive any rules or regulations that "impede coordinated service delivery," and Minnesota's intera-

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gency Children's Cabinet is charged with assisting local collaboratives in obtaining waivers from state or federal regulations that impede implementation of local plans. While waiver procedures are useful, they may prove onerous. They typically put the burden of researching individual waiver requests on local communities, which rarely have the resources, time, or expertise to undertake such tasks.

- **Repeal of state law.** In the long run, repeal of specific sections of state law that present obstacles to implementation of community plans will be necessary. For the present, however, with each community focusing on different outcomes, services, and populations, there is no way to identify the sections of laws that should generally be repealed.

- **Negotiated contracts.** The sample legislation uses a negotiated contract to allow communities or jurisdictions responsible for plan implementation to come to a legal agreement with their state, specifying each party's duties and obligations for plan implementation. Instead of requiring communities to specify waivers, negotiated contracts can obligate the state to find legal ways to permit flexible funding and program administration. Negotiated contracts can also specify sanctions or plans for corrective actions up to and including contract revocation or non-renewal if contract conditions are not met.

Savings and other incentives. (Section 3(g))

What incentives are available to encourage communities to develop comprehensive support systems?

Policy makers who wish to encourage communities to develop comprehensive support systems can build incentives into legislation. The sample legislation includes four explicit incentives:

- **Flexible use of funds.** Permission to shift funds to better meet specific community needs has strong appeal for local policy makers and program administrators. As an example, the incentive created by flexible fund use is an important component of Virginia's Comprehensive Services Act, which folded eight categorical grant programs into a single pool.

- **Permission to change administrative rules and eligibility standards.** Many communities chafe under rules that are designed to address a whole state, but rarely fit any one community. Permitting greater freedom in program design and administration—a critical feature of enabling statutes such as Iowa's Decategorization Statute and Ohio's Family and Children First Statute—has encouraged communities to initiate local planning processes.

- **Retention of savings.** Allowing communities to retain savings realized from more efficient use of funds, rather than to return them to the state at the end of each fiscal year, provides funding to further community plans for children and families. West Virginia uses this strategy, permitting any savings resulting from coordination of programs and services by Family Resource Networks to be re-invested in child and family services.

☞ **New money.** Small amounts of funds for start-up and capacity-building grants are included in the sample legislation. Often even small amounts of "seed money" will tip the balance toward moving in new directions. This strategy is being used in North Carolina's Smart Start program, which provides grant funds to counties on a competitive basis to fund a broad range of educational and support services for children under six years of age.

Section 4. Building State Government Collaboration to Support Communities: State Council for Children and Families

Overview: The state government's role in the partnership.

THIS SECTION of the sample legislation describes the state government role in the partnership. It creates both a collaborative council composed of representatives of both the executive branch (the governor or his/her designee, and state officials responsible for child and family services) and the legislative branch of government, and a citizens' advisory commission. The council has four major responsibilities.

- The first three involve policy development, to:
    - Develop and recommend a statewide agenda incorporating a new results-based accountability system for children, families, and communities;
    - Devise a plan for state agencies to work with communities to achieve the goals of the state agenda and community plans; and
    - Recommend a process for developing a state child and family budget.
- The fourth responsibility requires both policy development and implementation, to:
    - Evaluate, approve, and monitor community plans.

Although all of the functions are integral and essential components of the partnership, each represents a significant change in the ways that state government traditionally governs and budgets for human services. Each requires a significant commitment of staff time and energy, and may be practically and politically difficult to implement. For that reason, states will need to move carefully and slowly in initiating these activities. They may choose to gradually phase in the four functions to ensure that state policy makers are not overwhelmed by the magnitude of the effort.

Why is state government given a strong role in the partnership?

A strong state role is necessary to:

- Coordinate state agency implementation of approved community plans;
- Remove state barriers to the plans;
- Maintain statewide quality thresholds for services; and
- Ensure oversight over state funds.

Although Section 3 of the sample legislation authorizes communities to blend funds and propose program and administrative changes, these changes will prove difficult to execute without a state structure promoting interagency cooperation. State government leadership is also necessary to remove or modify institutional barriers likely to constrain community plans, such as categorical state budgets or standardized reporting requirements.

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Although flexibility is necessary to the success of community plans, state government has the obligation to balance this flexibility with concerns for equity and the protection of health, safety, and individual rights. The state must also ensure access to a minimum level of services for all citizens, and maintain minimum standards for health, safety, and well-being. Moreover, the state must work closely with communities to coordinate community and state goals and results.

Who should be in charge at the state level? (Section 4(a))

The state role may be carried out in a variety of ways. Three options are a high-level policy council, the governor's office, or a department of child and family services.

- **Policy council.** The option selected for the sample legislation, the state council for children and families, is a high-level policy advisory council composed of state agency heads responsible for child and family services (education, health, social services, juvenile justice, etc.) and legislative representatives. Particularly if chaired by the governor, a council can provide an effective forum for policy discussion among participants with different points of view, and a strong impetus for policy implementation by members of the council. The disadvantage of policy councils is that they usually do not have direct authority to execute decisions. They must rely upon the governor, legislature, or individual agencies—each which may have its own agenda—to implement policy.

- **Department of child and family services.** Authority for the state role in the partnership may also be placed in a consolidated state agency responsible for key programs for children and families, such as education, health, social services, and juvenile justice. This configuration increases both the ease of policy making and the likelihood that policies to promote comprehensive child and family support systems will be implemented, since they are internal to one agency. However, there are several pitfalls to this approach. Depending on the size of the state bureaucracy, as well as constitutional provisions for separately elected state superintendents of education, it may not be feasible to consolidate many functions under one roof. Key agencies may be left out of state policy making on child and family services. In any case, state agency reorganization can cause major practical and political headaches.

- **Governor's office.** A third option is to manage the state initiative through the governor's office. While it is extremely valuable to have the leadership and authority of the governor's office, two problems may arise. First, legislators and other elected officials such as the superintendent of education and the attorney general may not participate in programs led and owned solely by the governor, due to political differences. Second, if the initiative is exclusively identified with one governor, it may not become adequately institutionalized. There is then a danger of state collaborative initiatives fading away when a new governor comes into office with new ideas, eager to distinguish his/her actions from a predecessor's.

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How should the state council be led and what are its staffing needs?

Whether the state council is chaired by the governor or by another individual, strong leadership is critical. In order to implement a unified, collaborative state policy agenda for children and families, the council should operate on a consensus model. Skilled leadership is needed to work through the difficulties inherent in collaborative decision making. Attention must also be paid to naming a respected and credible lead agency or individual to take responsibility for establishing regular meetings, setting the agenda, recording decisions, and, most importantly, monitoring the implementation of policy decisions. Equally important is adequate, knowledgeable staff to carry out council functions. Staff may be assigned directly to the state council or loaned to it by participating agencies.

Who should be included on the state council? (Section 4(b))

A rule of thumb for membership on the state council is that state officials should be included if:

(1) Their programs and funds are likely to be included in community plans for comprehensive services and supports; or

(2) They are responsible for overall state administrative activities or budget activities that could be affected either by community plans or by the statewide agenda for children and families.

In most states, members would include, at a minimum, state officials responsible for public education, health and welfare, juvenile justice, economic and employment development, housing, transportation, and state administration and finance. Legislators or local representatives may also be participants.

- ☞ **Legislators.** State tradition and politics will probably determine whether legislators should participate as council members. In some states, councils sponsored by the executive branch—such as in Washington's Family Policy Council and Maryland's Governor's Task Force on Children Youth and Families System Reform—explicitly include legislators, usually as non-voting members. These states find that including legislators in collaborative policy decisions helps them move authorizations and appropriations through their state legislatures. In other states, legislators are not included, due to traditions of complete separation between the executive and legislative branches of government, lack of trust preventing honest discussion between legislators and state administrators, or partisan politics.

- ☞ **Public or community members.** State practice may also determine whether community members serve on policy making councils. Private citizens, and business and community representatives regularly participate on policy councils in some states, bringing a local perspective not shared by state administrators. In other states, private citizens do not normally serve on panels with authority for spending public funds. If public members are not included in the state council, however, it is extremely important to obtain community and public perspective either through a citizens' advisory commission to the state council, as in the sample legislation, or through some other continuing process.

What is a statewide agenda for children and families, and what is its purpose? (Section 4(c) (1))[6]

The purpose of a statewide agenda for children and families is to determine what results the citizens of a state want for their children and families, and then to map out a plan to measure the results. Most programs, services, and supports currently do not gather information on their outcomes. State and local programs for children and families are evaluated primarily by measuring program inputs, such as how many units of service are offered, by whom they are offered, and for how long. The statewide agenda establishes new accountability criteria that emphasize the results of services, such as healthier children, school readiness, or safe communities.

The agenda for children and families:

- Establishes a common overall vision for the state's children and families (Step One);
- Identifies a set of desired results (outcomes) for children and families (Step Two); and
- Outlines a process for communities and state agencies to identify indicators of results and performance measures (Step Three).[7, 8]

☞ **Step One: Creating a statewide vision for children and families.**
A vision statement provides a succinct declaration of a state's overall goals for its children, families, and communities. It creates the conceptual framework for a new policy agenda. The simplicity of these one- or two-paragraph statements belies the difficulty of coming to agreement in crafting them. It is not unusual for consensus on the vision statement to take time and careful, thoughtful negotiation.

■ **The state of Nebraska developed the following vision for its Partnership for Health and Human Services:**

- **Each Nebraskan will have a quality of life that reflects safety, self-sufficiency, respect, health and well-being, and opportunities for maximum participation through new partnerships between the state and local communities.**

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[6] The statewide agenda may be directed either by the state council, in conjunction with the advisory commission on children and families, or by other organizations.

[7] Development of a statewide vision, results, and benchmarks or indicators for children and families is a complex process that cannot be fully described here. We offer only a few highlights. Please see the "Additional Resources" section of this document (Tab 5) for recommendations of other materials.

[8] The terminologies of results-based accountability are replete with definitional confusion. There are no standard definitions of results or outcomes, indicators, benchmarks, or performance measures, and states are using a variety of language to describe these concepts. To help states sort out appropriate terminology and initiate results-based accountability systems, The Finance Project is developing a guide to performance measurement, which will be produced in winter, 1996.

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☞ Step Two: Identifying expected results.

The second step in the agenda is to agree upon the most important broad, statewide expected results, or outcomes. These results follow directly from the vision statement.

■ The following statewide results for children and families were developed by the **Georgia Policy Council for Children and Families,** and adopted by state legislation:

- Improved child health: healthy children.
- Improved child development: children ready for school.
- Improved school success: children succeeding in school.
- Improved family functioning: strong families.
- Improved family economic self-sufficiency.

☞ Step Three: Identifying indicators and performance measures.

For each broad result, there may be many different factors, or indicators, that can be measured to show whether the broad result is being met.

■ If "improved child health" was chosen as a statewide result or outcome, some of the indicators might include:

- An increased number and rate of healthy babies born at full-term and normal birthweight.
- A reduction in preventable childhood disease.
- An increased number of families with health insurance.
- Fewer teen suicides.

Performance measures capture or reflect the contribution to the indicators made by public (or private) agencies. They may include measures of both the quality and quantity of resources devoted to a program (inputs), as well as the products and services (outputs) of the agency.

■ Performance measures related to the indicator listed above regarding increased healthy births might include:

- The number of pregnant women seen in a neighborhood clinic.
- Percentage of women entering care in the first trimester.
- Percentage of women applying for prenatal care seen within three weeks.
- Percentage of live births to clinic patients that are low birthweight.
- Percentage (or number) of pregnant women receiving counseling on medication issues.

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State agencies and communities will find that they place differing priorities on indicators and performance measures, based on individual community needs and conditions, or the mission of an agency. There are many ways to achieve and measure results. The challenge of a statewide agenda is to establish broadly supported results and then provide adequate flexibility to communities to pursue and measure those results in ways best suited to their circumstances. State and local government officials; community council representatives; parents; community, business, K-12 and higher education leaders; and organizations that support families should all be included in the effort. Their inclusion may be orchestrated through local public meetings or hearings, joint meetings of the state council and the advisory commission, etc.

■ The **Minnesota Milestones** initiative offers a vision and process to guide Minnesota policy for the next 30 years. Over 10,000 citizens participated in public meetings to define their vision of Minnesota in the year 2020. Their responses were compiled by the state Planning Department into 5 main principles, 20 broad goals, and 79 specific milestones. The Children's Report Card gathers and reports county-by-county data on 21 indicators related to the milestones concerning children, including poverty, school dropouts, and runaways. In addition, the Children's Cabinet, composed of state agencies with jurisdiction over children, takes responsibility for attaining the milestones relating to children. Each agency is responsible for developing strategies for the milestones related to its mission. Minnesota has also developed a Performance and Outcome Reporting and Monitoring System. Performance measures are incorporated into annual Performance Reports.

■ **Vermont** issues an annual report on "The Social Health Status of Vermonters" that shows performance data for the state in eight categories: citizen well-being, including families and children; teens; public health; economic security; education; the elderly; safety/crime/corrections; and people with physical or mental disabilities. Statewide 10-year trend data are presented for more than half of these indicators. In addition, in 1995, the Agency of Human Services and the Department of Education jointly issued a set of Community Profiles that provides information on education and health status for every school district in the state.

Although community input is essential, the development of state and community results, indicators, and performance measures must also be based on ongoing research and data collection. In order for results and performance measures to be meaningful, data collection systems must be established,[9] and baseline information collected for key results, indicators, and measures. A start toward identifying these data has been made through a few national, state, and local efforts such as *Kids Count* and the impressive *Profiles of Los Angeles County*. However, relatively few states and communities currently collect data on results. The capacity to collect and share data must be developed over time. In the meantime, states such as Oregon and Texas that are establishing results-based accountability systems have pragmatically used whatever data they have available to develop indicators and performance measures, and have worked to gradually increase their data capacity.

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[9] See Section 6 of this guide.

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How are state agencies coordinated? (Section 4(c) (2))

The primary role of the state council is to develop and maintain community support systems, and to establish correlated goals. The second major role of the state council is to coordinate state agency involvement in the partnership. Ongoing collaboration among agencies is needed to develop procedures to resolve cross-agency issues raised by community plans and the statewide agenda for children and families. Agencies will also have to work out leadership, staffing, and budget issues:

- How much time, resources and staff from each agency should be devoted to council activities?
- Who should take the lead on various tasks?
- How are joint decisions to be made?

Consistent, coordinated work will also be required to gradually shift from categorical program management to results-based accountability.

What role does results-based budgeting play in creating comprehensive supports and services for children and families? (Section 4(c) (3))

The state budget is probably the most important policy-setting tool in state government. In practical terms, the distribution of funds virtually always dictates state priorities and practices. As long as the majority of state and federal funds for child and family services are budgeted in a categorical fashion, comprehensive services and supports will remain an afterthought to the heavily funded "mainstream" categorical programs.

In order to change this emphasis, the sample legislation provides for the state council, in collaboration with communities, to develop a process to move away from categorical budgeting towards results-based budgeting. This responsibility is based on initiatives in several states to institute performance (results)-based budgeting.[10]

■ **Arizona** requires all state agencies to develop three-year strategic plans with performance measures. Regular program reviews will be conducted to determine whether programs should be retained, eliminated, or modified.

■ **Oregon** has devised a process in which each state agency tracks program funding by the benchmarks (results) established by the state. The intention is that state budget allocations eventually will be based on agency and community performance in meeting the benchmarks. At the local level, Oregon's Multnomah County is currently farthest along in implementing the new performance-based budgeting system.

■ In **Texas,** state agencies select performance measures that are used by the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor's Office to make annual budget recommendations.

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[10] More information on these initiatives and on performance-based budgeting for child and family services is available from two Finance Project papers: *A Strategy Map for Results-Based Budgeting: Moving from Theory to Practice,* by Mark Friedman, and a guide to performance measurement, due to be released winter, 1996. Another excellent resource from the Center for the Study of Social Policy is the draft paper *From Outcomes to Budgets: An Approach to Outcome Based Budgeting for Family and Children's Services.*

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How does the state council interact with community support systems? (Evaluating, monitoring, and approving community plans.) (Section 4(c) (4))

In many ways, this section of the sample legislation is similar to any legislation laying out state responsibilities for locally administered programs. The state:

- Sets up parameters for community plans;
- Provides state data to enable local planning;
- Approves plans that meet the guidelines;
- Establishes sanctions for communities that deviate from state standards and guidelines;
- Monitors program compliance;
- Allocates start-up funds; and
- Provides for evaluation.

The similarities to standard state legislation, however, are somewhat misleading. In state/community partnerships, state agency responsibilities for evaluating and monitoring local plans will involve new and complex ways of managing programs and funds. A few are described below.

☞ **Collaborative multiple agency involvement.** Most community plans, in order to meet identified results and implement strategies, will rely on funds and programs from more than one state agency. The state council, therefore, must establish and institutionalize collaborative procedures among all the departments affected by the community plans for:

- Development of plan guidelines;
- Negotiations with communities;
- Plan approval;
- Data collection; and
- Other activities.

☞ **Community flexibility rather than standardized programs.** Traditional categorical programs were standardized as one-size-fits-all; little local flexibility was permitted. Community plans, however, will be designed to meet local priorities, fit citizens' needs, and achieve desired results. They will vary widely. State agencies will have to adapt program and funding management procedures to allow greater flexibility. In some cases, laws may have to be changed. Agency staff will also have to figure out how to deal efficiently with plans that differ widely one from another. During the transition from categorical to comprehensive services, provisions will have to be made to adapt current programs to community plans. The establishment of minimum standards of services to ensure equity of services will also have to be explored, in order to maintain integrity and oversight for state goals and results.

☞ **Federal waivers.** With the emphases on local flexibility and results-based accountability that come with these state/community partnerships, there are likely to be increased numbers of requests for changes in regulations governing federal programs and their funding. State agency staff may find themselves either (1) spending significant time explaining to community representatives federal waiver rules and regulations, and the laws that underlie federal funding, or (2) actually undergoing the rigorous, time-consuming, frustrating process of seeking federal waivers. States will have to weigh the value of flexibility and state alternatives to federal waivers with the difficulty (and often impossibility) of obtaining those waivers. (However, as federal block grants are becoming law, such as in the welfare reform overhaul—the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996—there is less need to pursue federal waivers.)

- **New compliance, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms.** In addition to assessing whether public funds have been spent prudently and appropriately, agencies will have to learn how to evaluate program effectiveness by examining the results of state and community supports and services. State agencies, in collaboration with communities, will have to design new compliance and evaluation procedures that promote better results, ensure program quality, and still guard against fraud.

- **Limited expertise.** Although many communities and states are starting to build results-based, comprehensive, community support systems, they have mainly had to learn by doing. Current management experience is based on the administration of categorical programs and funding. Few community or state agency leaders have expertise in building new systems of services and supports, particularly ones that comprehensively respond to community needs. There is a great need to capture existing state and local knowledge, and use it to benefit others. States and communities will benefit from working together to identify knowledgeable individuals and create a technical assistance network to help build both state and community capacity to manage the planning and administration of community support systems.

Why involve the state council in advocacy and communication?

Many state administrators are uncomfortable with the role of advocacy. They believe that their proper role is program administration, and they leave advocacy to legislators, lobbyists, and the governor's office. The advocacy role included in the sample legislation recognizes that the state council must actively promote changes to state and federal laws that constrain the development of flexible, community-based child and family support systems. Without education and encouragement to pursue alternatives to inflexible categorical programs, lawmakers are unlikely to promote legislation that will provide either the flexibility or the results-based accountability upon which community-based support systems are dependent.

The sample legislation involves the state council not only in advocacy, but also in public communication. Extensive communication is essential to promote the development of community support systems, and to remain accountable to communities for the results of services supported by public and private resources.

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What is the purpose of a commission on children and families? (Section 4(d))

Community input from local government, community and religious leaders, the business community, education officials, and the general public is critical to the success of the partnership at the state level. The sample legislation, recognizing the practices of many states, does not include citizen representatives on the state council. Instead, local citizen input and the community perspective are provided by a separate commission on children and families. (If citizen participation is included on the state council, a separate advisory commission may not be needed.) In order to give the commission adequate stature and credibility with the state council, the sample legislation requires that the commission meet regularly and publicly, both to advise the state council, and to review and comment on the state council's recommendations before the recommendations are released. In addition, commitment to the commission is demonstrated through provision of a budget, an executive director, and an office. Details on the specific composition of the commission and its other duties can vary from state to state.

Section 5. Creating a State Child and Family Fund

Overview: The origin and purpose of a state child and family fund.

THIS SECTION of the sample legislation lays out financing options and uses for the state child and family fund. The purpose of the state child and family fund is to provide:

- **A source of non-categorical monies to serve as incentives for communities to develop comprehensive support systems for children and families; and**
- **A dedicated funding source for state and local start-up and capacity-building.**

The sample legislation calls for the state child and family fund to be financed by redirecting a portion of existing monies for child and family services. Additionally, states may collect and appropriate new funds, or expand the use of other funds. As the partnership matures, to the extent that categorical monies are gradually replaced by more comprehensive blended funds, states may choose to allocate an increasingly larger portion of their budgets for direct services to the child and family fund. The resources of the fund can then be distributed to community-based support systems.

The rationale and political perils of a child and family fund.

Establishing any new fund for child and family services should be approached cautiously. In recent years, state legislatures, faced with the challenges of balancing their budgets, have been more inclined to cut child and family services than to establish new line items. Too often, legislators, governors, and even state budget officials have only a vague idea about overall spending patterns for the millions of dollars budgeted for the hundreds of federal, state, and local categorical programs for child and family services, administered through multiple state agencies. They also have little knowledge of how much is spent for services and how much for program administration. Without these data, it is difficult to judge the ability of current budgets to support the legitimate needs of children and families. Many legislators tend to focus on program inefficiencies, and then they use their knowledge of inefficiencies to justify cuts in funding.

In order to convince legislators and other policy makers about the value of a child and family fund, the need for non-categorical funds should be documented. One strategy is to prepare summary budget data that capture existing spending for children and families *across agencies and programs* by broad categories such as education, health, child welfare, etc. If possible, this budget data should include estimates of the percentage of overall administrative expenses allocated to provide the services. Administrative inefficiencies and overlaps identified in current spending patterns are likely to go far in making the case for providing non-categorical state dollars to support a results-based, comprehensive, community-focused service system.

Once policy makers are persuaded that a fund is necessary, they must be persuaded to adequately finance it. The partnership, like any new initiative, will require money. Dedicated funding is needed for:

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- Planning;
- Coordination activities;
- Technical assistance;
- Development of state and local accountability and data systems; and
- Support for the state council and the commission on children and families.

In planning the phased implementation of the partnership, the start-up costs for new systems (for community plan development and approval, accountability, performance-based budgeting, data collection, etc.) should be carefully considered to determine the amount of dollars to be placed in the fund during the first and succeeding years. Strategically, it is usually easier to start small. Legislators often have less trouble supporting small obligations of funds than large ones.

As more efficient state/local systems are developed, the percentage of the state child and family fund needed to administer the partnership should decrease. The total amount of money in the fund, however, is likely to increase substantially over time as support builds for the partnership and as more money from categorical programs is rechanneled into blended funds.

Establishing a fund. (Section 5(b))

Money talks. To a large extent, the credibility of the partnership will be judged by how and to what extent it is funded. Finding reliable, steady revenue sources to finance a child and family fund, however, is a difficult task. Some options include:

■ **The Maryland Systems Reform Initiative** directs the state interagency Subcabinet for Children, Youth and Families to establish a fund that includes all state funds for out-of-home care and for services that prevent out-of-home placements. The fund is designated to facilitate interagency planning and the shifting of resources from out-of-home care to prevention.

■ **Virginia's Comprehensive Services Act** folds eight categorical programs into a single pool, which is distributed among the counties based on their populations of children in need of multiple services. Community Policy and Management Teams may use most of the funds in whatever way they choose, although some funds must be used to reduce the use of residential care facilities.

☞ **Redirection of existing funds.** The sample legislation does not assume that there will be any "new money" to fund partnership activities. It directs the legislature to re-allocate a portion of existing funds for programs for child and family services into the state child and family fund. This approach requires state agency directors administering child and family services or programs to undergo the painful process of diverting limited funds to the new system. Commitment of these leaders to results-based community support systems will be important for the success of this funding strategy. Moreover, selection of funds to be diverted is also critical. Depending on how the child and family fund is defined, state funds could be used imaginatively to draw down additional federal funds, or the utilization of federal funds could be precluded altogether.

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☞ **New revenue.** In most states, the mere suggestion of new taxes or fees is political anathema. Some states, however, have raised taxes, or developed special taxing districts to raise new revenue dedicated to funding services for children.

☞ **Earmarked funding.** Many states dedicate existing or new funds for child and family services.[11] Programs may be financed by creating or raising fees on related services, such as registration or licensure of child care providers, or birth or marriage certificates. In addition, more creative, voluntary options have been employed, such as contributions from income tax "check-offs," or fees for special license plates.

Although they are intended to be relatively "painless" ways to raise money, earmarked funding sources have several disadvantages. First, dedicated funding sources limit the discretion and flexibility of governors and legislatures to utilize state funds where they are most needed. Moreover, revenues based on voluntary contributions may vary widely from year to year, as citizens change their spending preferences. Finally, special or earmarked funds may lead to complacency on the part of policy makers, who may believe that once an earmarked funding source has been established, the need for funding a particular service has been met in perpetuity.

Uses for the state child and family fund: A rationale for allocating funds.

The sample legislation permits the child and family fund to be used to:

- Fund community start-up and capacity-building grants;

■ In the mid-1980s, **Florida** enacted legislation to permit local communities to create special taxing districts to finance special services for children and their families. Special taxing districts have been established by Palm Beach and Pinellas Counties to plan, coordinate, fund, and evaluate programs to address the needs of children. Funding comes from an ad valorem tax assessment of up to one-half mill ($0.50 per $1000) of non-exempt valuation on the local property tax.

■ The **Kentucky Education Reform Act,** which revamped the state's entire education system, instituted a minimum property tax rate for all local education agencies (LEAs), and permitted LEAs to increase their property tax rate above the minimum level and to impose taxes on local utilities. The statute also increased the sales tax by one percent.

■ **California's** Proposition 98, passed by state voters in 1988, dedicates approximately 40% of the state general fund to education, including many child care and development programs. California raises additional funds for specific children's services through special fees for "Kids Plates" license plates. Since these license plates compete for funds with other special plates, however, they cannot be relied upon to provide a steady source of funds.

■ An income tax check-off has provided one of several sources of revenue for the **Missouri Children's Trust Fund.** However, contributions from the check-off have steadily declined over the last six years, due to increased competition for check-off contributions, and no procedures to inform citizens about the use of the Fund.

■ The **Texas Children's Trust Fund,** which awards grants to prevention programs across the state, is partially funded by the state's marriage license fees.

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[11] In states heavily constrained by constitutional or statutory tax and fee limits, earmarking funding streams may be one of the few viable options to raise new money.

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- Support the activities of the state council and the commission on children and families; and
- Over the long term, fund non-categorical community supports and services.

The sample legislation permits grants won by community councils with approved plans to be used to:

- Fund initial coordination activities;
- Develop data collection and management information systems aligned with state efforts;
- Design and implement training and education activities for administrators, educators, and human services workers; and
- Support other technical assistance activities.[12]

■ Since 1991, California's Department of Education, in conjunction with the interagency **Healthy Start Support Services for Children Council,** has provided planning and operational grants to local "collaboratives" serving 890 schools in 53 of California's 58 counties. The $400,000 three-year operational grants are intended to fund start-up monies and coordinating or "glue" money for school-linked, community-provided integrated services.

■ **North Carolina's Smart Start Program** was enacted in 1993 to make early childhood education and support services available to all children under six. The program provides competitive grants to broad-based local county partnerships to fund a wide variety of early childhood services. The partnership is responsible for developing a plan that identifies target populations and determines the scope of services to be provided.

States may also choose to use separate grants for the planning of community support systems, although such grants are not included in the sample legislation.

The size and number of grants to be distributed will vary by the amount of funding available, but they should be time-restricted and require a local match of funding or in-kind services. This match is intended to discourage long-term dependence on state funds and to ensure a community's commitment to building its own support system. After a grant period is over, ongoing resources for community support systems should come from more efficient use of de-categorized funding, and from local public and private resources.

Money from the state child and family fund may also be used to support the operation of the state council and the commission on children and families, and to finance development of the state/local accountability, management information, data collection, technical assistance, results-based budgeting, and other systems necessary to implement the full partnership. Politically, it is very important to cap state administrative costs, so that the partnership is not viewed as another costly layer of government.

Finally, over time, the child and family fund may be a useful vehicle for decategorizing other program funds that are currently subject to narrow program restrictions. In order to give communities more discretion in choosing which supports and services they will provide, how they will be delivered, by whom, and to whom, states may seek to create greater flexibility in categorical program authorities and

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[12] See Section 6 of this guide.

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budgets. As the Center for the Study of Social Policy and others have suggested, one way this can be done is for localities to have the authority to use "clusters" of related public dollars and program authority to address community needs, guided by community plans jointly agreed to by the local governing entity and the state.[13]

States could challenge localities to identify critical problems that warrant special attention and develop strategies to address them. Through this process of self-assessment and planning, communities would develop a clearly defined set of target results for children and families. To support their efforts to achieve desired results, states could identify "clusters" of categorical program funds which could be bundled and decategorized. In exchange for greater flexibility in the use of these funds, communities would accept greater responsibility for ensuring that target populations receive needed supports and services and that the desired results are achieved.[14]

The child and family fund could be the vehicle for receiving, bundling, and allocating decategorized funds to communities. As resources are decategorized, however, the state would not give up all control over these funds. State statutes should define how much flexibility localities have in the use of the funds. As emphasized earlier, the state must also maintain essential protections for vulnerable populations and set standards for access to services and for service quality. Any local governance entity opting to take advantage of these flexible funds would agree to adhere to these protections and safeguards as a part of its plan.[15]

Undoubtedly, states will differ in how and to what extend they use their child and family fund for decategorization. One possibility is that state legislation could specify the general clusters of related funding streams that could be bundled—for example, early childhood education, child care, family support, family preservation, child protection, and emergency services; or teen pregnancy prevention, substance abuse prevention and treatment, runaway youth, juvenile justice, and adolescent mental health, etc. State statutes could also specify the terms and conditions under which communities are allowed to apply for and receive these funds.[16]

Because decategorization raises the political sensitivities of many constituencies, it may be best to initiate efforts to use the child and family fund for this purpose as demonstrations or pilot projects. Experimenting with more flexible use of a few related program authorities in several communities will help state and local leaders learn how to implement decategorization so that it is most responsive to community needs and attracts the broadest possible support from affected political interest groups. Based on their experience, states then might take steps to expand the number of communities that can receive access to decategorized funding and the number and types of categorical program funds that can be combined.

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[13] Center for the Study of Social Policy, "A Legislative Strategy to Support Local Governance." Draft background paper for the Changing Governance Strategies for Action Working Group. September 1996; *National Commission on Children, Beyond Rhetoric: A New American Agenda for Children and Families* (Washington, DC: National Commission on Children, 1991).

[14] Center for the Study of Social Policy, "A Legislative Strategy..." Op. Cit.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

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Section 6. Overcoming Institutional Barriers to State/Community Support Systems

Overview: A plan to overcome institutional barriers to state/community support systems.

IN ORDER to transform the service delivery system from one based on categorical programs to a results-based system supporting flexible community plans, this section of the sample legislation describes a plan to be developed by the state council in collaboration with others. Activities in the plan include:

- **Identification and review of state statutes and regulations that inhibit community-based support systems, with recommendations for appropriate changes;**
- **Development of a compatible data collection/management information system;**
- **Creation of a technical assistance network; and**
- **A review of professional education curricula, and state professional and credentialing standards.**

The reason for a plan.

For the past forty years, categorical programs have shaped this country's service delivery system. They resulted in a myriad of narrowly-focused, poorly-connected services for children and families. They also significantly shaped the public infrastructure that administers and operates these programs and services. As a result of this service delivery system and its infrastructure, there are many barriers to comprehensive state/community supports and services. Each program is governed by separate statutes and regulations, monitored by specialized staff with limited knowledge of other programs, and subject to program-based reporting requirements and separate data systems. Most front-line workers and administrators are also specialists. They have been professionally trained in a specific discipline, and are accustomed to working only within the categorical confines of their training and programs.

Changing the infrastructure in order to support community-based comprehensive support systems rather than categorical programs will be a long-term process that will require the involvement of many players. Each state will have to proceed at its own pace.

Review of statutes and regulations. (Section 6(b) (1))

To move away from categorical programs, many narrowly-focused laws will need to be changed. Development of a methodical multi-year plan with timelines, assigned responsibilities, and resources will be needed to identify statutes and regulations that are candidates for repeal or amendment. The first step of the plan might be to review community plans submitted to the state council. The community plans will identify areas where changes in the law are needed either to blend funds or offer ser-

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vices in alternative ways that will meet community and state results. Proposed changes in the law would then be brought before the legislature. (Although federal law cannot be changed unilaterally by a state, it may be advantageous to track federal statutes that present substantial barriers to comprehensive, community-based support systems. This data may prove valuable in convincing Congress to modify such statutes.)

Strategically, in addition to including state administrators, state and community council representatives, and others in the review of statutes and regulations, it is essential to include legislators and legislative staff in this process. It will ultimately be up to them to persuade their colleagues to enact statutory changes.

Development of a coordinated child, family, and community management information system. (Section 6(b) (2))

The second activity in building a supportive infrastructure is the development of a coordinated data system for community-based support systems. In many states, current data systems are narrow and program-focused, ineffective, cumbersome, and expensive; changes are needed. A new, integrated data system would:

- Collect and share standardized data on service utilization, quality, cost, eligibility determination, and results across service systems and levels of government;
- Provide required federal reports; and
- Protect client confidentiality.

However, the mere thought of creating and funding a new system such as this is enough to prematurely age hundreds of state and local administrators. Yet, ultimately, such a system will be necessary in order to track state and community results, and to ensure that communities are meeting minimum standards for services.

The development and creation of an effective management information system should be approached carefully and incrementally. It will probably take years and many dollars to implement. It should be

■ In 1995, Missouri enacted the **Missouri Coordinated Information System Statute,** which directs the Department of Social Services, Department of Mental Health, Department of Health, and the state courts to coordinate their information system to permit individual children to be tracked by any of the agencies. The coordination may involve creating uniform case identifiers, consolidating databases across the agencies, creating electronic linkages between automated information systems, or developing a single system that meets the needs of all four agencies.

■ Delaware has created a **Master Client Index** that electronically tracks client records across a variety of health and human services programs, including Medicaid, food stamps, child support, AFDC, and public health. In addition, the system contains all census data for the human services program. Although the system does not provide detailed case information across programs, it notifies caseworkers regarding the participation of clients in the various programs. Delaware is pursuing plans to create a common front-end process for assessment and intake, and to develop an Information and Referral kiosk.

based on data sharing across secure networks, using up-to-date network technology, which can mitigate some of the costs of specific hardware or software. Paperwork for families and local agencies should also be minimized. While creating a new system is a major undertaking that requires significant time, effort, money, and state-of-the-art expertise, some states have approached this task in innovative ways.

Creating a technical assistance and training network. (Section 6(b) (3))

Professionals in state government and communities who are engaged in developing comprehensive support systems for children and families occasionally find themselves overwhelmed by the magnitude of changes that may be required. Working on a learn-as-you-go basis, they must deal with multiple new concepts such as collaborative service delivery, community governance, and results-based accountability. While many workers find these changes exciting, they are acutely aware that they have not been appropriately prepared for them by either their professional training or experience.

The sample legislation calls for the state council, in collaboration with communities, to develop a plan to fund and implement a state/community system to identify and meet the technical assistance needs of state and local administrators, community representatives, and workers in comprehensive community support systems. This plan should ensure that all members of collaborative teams, including community advocates and representatives, are provided the opportunity to develop the skills that are needed to participate effectively and to work collaboratively across professional domains.

Building a technical support system where expertise is both new and widely scattered is challenging. The key is to link individuals who have gained specific areas of knowledge and experience with those who need the knowledge, and then to make this information widely accessible. In order to be effective, a technical network must also be flexible. It must have the capacity to provide a variety of types of assistance, including:

- Large in-person or Internet training sessions to address general technical needs;
- One-on-one coaching to meet individual needs;
- Trouble-shooting teams of experienced state and local administrators; and
- Networks of local and state counterparts who can be called upon informally.

And, like all the components of the infrastructure plan, it should be adequately funded to ensure that technical assistance is sufficient to meet community needs.

Reviewing and re-designing professional education, licensing, and credentialing. (Section 6(b) (4))

In addition to meeting short-term technical assistance needs, the infrastructure plan includes a review of professional education curricula, licensing, and credentialing requirements. Professionals must have access to training that will prepare them to work in community-based, collaborative settings. Workers currently in collaborative settings frequently find that they have difficulty adjusting to working closely with other human services professionals or non-professional community leaders. Each professional has usually had very little exposure to the other disciplines. Trained in specialized disciplines to work in narrow agency settings with a specific group of either individuals or problems, each professional group uses its own distinctive language, philosophy, and methodology. With such different professional backgrounds, building collaborative teams is challenging.

Community-based support systems need professionals who are trained not only in their specialization, but who have knowledge of other disciplines, experience with collaborative practices, and familiarity with results-based accountability measures. Although most professional training programs continue to narrowly train their students, a few colleges and universities across the country are committed to providing cross-disciplinary, inter-professional education.

In most states, issues of academic freedom prevent legislatures from asserting direct influence on university curricula. However, legislatures can change requirements for state licenses and teaching credentials, which in turn can lead to changes in professional education programs. The sample legislation calls for the state council to develop a plan to review appropriate professional licenses and credentials. The review would determine if current requirements for pre-service training and continuing education ensure that professionals are trained in relevant and useful areas for working in comprehensive, community-based support systems. These reviews should be conducted by collaborative teams including educators, practitioners, state agencies, and community representatives, and should result in recommendations presented to the state council, governor, and legislature.

■ The **California State University** (CSU) system is developing a systemwide effort on its 21 campuses to promote interprofessional training at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Leadership for this effort is provided by three programs currently developing and implementing interprofessional programs: the Center for Collaboration for Children and Families at CSU Fullerton, the Integrated Services Specialist Program at San Francisco State University, and the brand new interdisciplinary Institute for Community Collaborative Studies at CSU Monterey Bay.

■ **Miami University of Ohio** is developing interprofessional graduate and professional development programs among faculty from nursing, social work, family-child studies, and a variety of education-related programs. Undergraduate liberal education courses are also being redesigned to prepare students for community collaboration.

■ The **University of Washington Human Service Policy Center's** Training for Interprofessional Collaboration Project brings together master's and doctoral level students from education, social work, public health, nursing, and public policy to learn the skills necessary to work as a collaborative team. The program views interprofessional collaboration as a process in which organizations, families, and communities with diverse knowledge and resources join in partnership to address issues related to family and community well-being.

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Conclusion

The recent federal overhaul of the welfare system marks a significant change in how government views its role in serving children and families and building communities. It clears away many categorical restrictions, offers great flexibility to states to design programs responsive to local needs, and clearly sets out the desired results: putting welfare recipients to work. Despite potential flaws in the law, it offers states the opportunity to significantly restructure much of the current public child and family services system. This sample legislation for community-based, state-guided comprehensive support systems provides a useful foundation for putting in place the essential components of a re-formulated system—a system in which communities and the state join together to tangibly improve the lives of children and families and the communities in which they live.

Building Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children and Families: A Review of Legislative Examples

Contents

A review and analysis of federal and state legislation for building comprehensive, community-based support systems for children and families, highlighting key similarities, differences, trends over time, and noteworthy features

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Building Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children and Families:
A Review of Legislative Examples

Introduction and Overview

THIS SECTION provides an overview of federal and state legislative efforts to develop comprehensive, community-based support systems for children and families. The basis for this overview is a representative sample of 31 bills and statutes (10 federal, 21 state). The section addresses the potential roles for legislation in the development of comprehensive systems; the major elements of system reform that have been incorporated into state and federal legislation; and some notable similarities and differences in the approaches to reform illustrated by the sample legislation. It concludes with an assessment of some themes that emerge from this sample that could be the subject of future research or legislative activity. Attachment A provides a matrix indicating which of the major components of comprehensive support systems are addressed by each of these statutes. Attachement B provides a list of all relevant legislative citations.

Legislation in the Context of Comprehensive System Reform

Over the past decade, communities, states, and the federal government have created a wide range of initiatives designed to make services and supports for children and families more comprehensive, preventive, efficient, and accountable.[1] These initiatives develop in a wide variety of ways. Some begin as collaborations among public agencies in a community, then gradually expand to include a wider range of public and private service providers, and eventually develop a governance capacity of their own. Some start as pilot projects or demonstration programs that spur new relationships and business processes among service providers; such initiatives can produce systemic changes that far outlast the original pilot or demonstration stage. Other initiatives begin at the instigation of citizens or community organizations. Some initiatives are driven by opportunities or incentives offered by legislation, such as waivers from certain regulations or increased flexibility in the use of some funding. And in

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[1] Cheryl D. Hayes, Elise Lipoff, and Anna E. Danegger, *Compendium of Comprehensive, Community-based Initiatives: A Look at Costs, Benefits, and Financing Strategies* (Washington, DC: The Finance Project, July 1995); Jane Knitzer, Stephen Page, *Map-and-Track: State Initiatives for Young Children and Families* (New York: National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University, 1996).

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some cases a single initiative can dramatically reshape entire governance, financing, and administrative systems.

These initiatives involve changes not just in the services provided, but in the way that child-serving organizations do business: how decisions and policies are made, how different agencies and levels of government work together, and how individual programs are evaluated and funded. This means that in addition to new policies, regulations, and programs, comprehensive systems require new governance structures, funding systems, and management and administrative practices. Changes of this magnitude are difficult to accomplish under any circumstances, and comprehensive system reforms often must proceed using whatever tools are available to them at a given time. Voluntary cooperation may be adequate to establish collaborative relationships among service providers in a community. A new program or flexible funding source may be necessary to build on these relationships by stimulating interagency planning. Citizen or community activism may be needed to inform this planning process with a comprehensive assessment of community needs. And nothing short of leadership from the political sphere may be able to knit together all of these activities into a comprehensive system.

As one of the tools available to those who seek to develop comprehensive systems, legislation has come into play in a wide variety of ways:

- Some state and federal statutes have followed an up-front comprehensive strategy, initiating a comprehensive reform process or creating entirely new structures of governance, financing, and administration.[2]

- Other statutes have followed a more incremental strategy, making changes in the governance and financing of selected programs, creating vehicles for interagency collaboration, or testing some category of reforms by way of pilot projects. These statutes may be driven by a comprehensive vision of reform, but they advance that vision one step at a time rather than all at once.

- Finally, some statutes have built on, rather than established, comprehensive system reforms. Where states or communities have already managed to change the way they do business through other means, legislation can serve a vital purpose by lending them the political support, institutional identity, and resources they need to survive and grow.

Innovation, collaboration, and the development of more preventive, comprehensive services do not necessarily require a legislative framework to bring them into being. But legislation can be a powerful tool to encourage and support such initiatives or to help them achieve recognition, acceptance, and permanence. Legislation is not always a sufficient condition for bringing about systemic change, but it is often a necessary one.

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[2] It is worth noting that while comprehensive support systems ideally blend both public and private resources to meet the needs of the community, legislation tends to focus largely or exclusively on public service delivery systems. To the extent that community organizations and informal support systems are the subject of legislation, they are as partners or supplements to publicly provided, formal services.

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Avenues for Legislative Action to Develop Comprehensive Systems

The Finance Project's Roundtable on Creating Model Legislation identified five broad elements of legislation that can help to build comprehensive, community-based support systems for children and families:

Building State/Community Partnerships. Within their own borders, communities should be primarily responsible for identifying the services, supports, and service delivery methods that are necessary and appropriate to help families meet their needs and those of their children. The federal government and the states should be responsible for setting broad goals for child and family well-being; giving communities the resources, assistance, and flexibility they need to achieve those goals; and holding communities accountable for the results they achieve, rather than the resources they use or the approaches they take to service delivery. This kind of strong, results-oriented partnership between communities and the federal and state governments can make service and support systems more flexible and responsive. Legislation can create mechanisms for coordinated planning between communities and a broad range of state and federal agencies that serve the children and families in those communities. These mechanisms should encourage investments that are responsive to local needs and priorities; identify shared goals; create shared risks and responsibilities; and provide flexibility in the funding and administration of community-based systems.

Achieving Measurable Results. Child- and family-serving organizations that receive public funding are typically held accountable for how much they spend and what activities they spend it on, but, too often, the question of what results they are actually achieving is never asked. This leaves the public uncertain about whether or not their taxes are really being well-spent, policy makers unclear about what services and supports are most deserving of funding, and service providers unable to demonstrate their effectiveness. Service and support systems should be focused on and held accountable for achieving improved results for children, families, and the communities in which they live. Results accountability should include three major elements:

1. clear *goals* or *objectives* for the system as a whole, to help define overall priorities;
2. *measurable indicators* to gauge progress toward achieving those goals, and to provide clear, objective information about the system's effectiveness; and
3. specific, realistic *performance targets* for programs and service providers that link their activities and services to the overall system goals.

Legislation can promote results-oriented accountability by adopting broad goals for children and families; creating mechanisms that enable communities to assess their own needs and goals; and promoting the development of meaningful indicators and performance targets for programs, service systems, or community governance systems.

Reforming Systems of Governance. Too many child- and family-serving organizations must work within governance structures that organize different types of services in separate, insulated agencies and systems; that centralize too much decision making at a level that is far removed from individual children and families and their particular needs; and that fail to reflect the close connections between the needs of children, their families, and the communities in which they live. Building comprehensive, community-based support systems requires that policy makers reconfigure those governance arrangements. Legislation can meet this need by restructuring programs for children and families to make them more responsive and flexible; by creating new governance relationships across both agencies and jurisdictions; and by realigning the roles and responsibilities of public agencies so that they can focus on meeting the needs of children, families, and communities.

Reforming Systems of Financing. Most funding for existing service systems is categorical and narrowly targeted, linked to providing defined units of services rather than correctly identifying and meeting the needs of individual children and families. Because so many children and families have a host of interrelated needs rather than one or two discrete needs, this type of categorical funding can make it difficult or impossible to respond appropriately to needy children and families. For this reason, comprehensive, community-based support systems must be able to blend funds from different sources. Legislation can remove an obstacle to the development of comprehensive systems by shifting categorical funding streams into a more flexible, results-based financing system.

Building Administrative and Management Capacity. Comprehensive systems also require closer coordination and communication among child- and family-serving agencies; more sharing of information across federal, state, local, and private boundaries; more flexible and community-based administrative procedures; and improved policy and management expertise, particularly at the community level. These capacities constitute the "platform system" necessary to support comprehensive reforms in governance and financing—to successfully make the transition to a comprehensive, community-based system. Existing systems must develop these capacities in order. Legislation should support initiatives to improve information management, professional development, monitoring, and evaluation capacities across the spectrum of child- and family-serving agencies.

Most comprehensive legislation addresses several of these components simultaneously. For example, a statute may create a state/community partnership, as well as new governance structures and financing arrangements to support that partnership. Others focus on only one or two components at a time, either as elements of an incremental reform strategy or as a way of institutionalizing reforms that have evolved without the aid of legislation.

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Examples of Comprehensive Legislation

The 31 examples reviewed for this analysis (see attachments A and B) represent a relatively small cross-section of the literally hundreds of pieces of state and federal legislation that have helped to build or support comprehensive system reform. All of the examples used here address at least one of the five components of comprehensive legislation discussed above. Otherwise, the examples represent a wide variety of approaches and experiences:

- They have been proposed or enacted in different eras. (The oldest examples are the New York State Council on Children and Families, established in 1977; the Education for the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986, which established comprehensive services for preschool-age children with disabilities; and the Texas Children's Trust Fund Statute of 1985, which is fairly typical of statutes in most states that have created new funding mechanisms for child abuse prevention programs.)

- Some examples address all five components of comprehensive reform, while others address one or two.

- Many have been enacted into law, while some have not (e.g., the Youth Development Community Block Grants Act, the Texas Child and Youth Partnerships Act).

- Some represent a very comprehensive approach, others an incremental approach, and still others the legislative establishment of an existing initiative.

- The examples vary in their environments, coming from different levels and sizes of government (i.e., federal, large states, smaller states), different governance structures (i.e., centrally administered and locally administered systems), and different regions of the country.

- They vary in their characteristics, differing in scope (i.e., affecting all children and families, or only certain populations), permanence (some are pilot projects, while others are permanent initiatives), and longevity (i.e., some are new, while others are well established).

It is hoped that this diversity of experiences and approaches will provide richer lessons about the place of legislation in the broader scheme of reforming service and support systems for children than could otherwise be gleaned from a small number of examples.

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Comparative Analysis of the Examples

Based on these examples, this report will attempt to identify similarities and differences among the issues they address, their approaches, and the political and implementation obstacles that some have encountered.

Building State/Community Partnerships

Embedded in nearly all of these statutes is a commitment to the principle of community governance. This reflects a widely held belief that communities are the best judges of their own needs and should have the flexibility, tools, and authority to tailor the service and support systems in their area to address those needs. The state and federal governments are thought to be best equipped to provide an overall governance structure, clear system-wide goals, and financial and technical resources that communities can use flexibly within that structure to achieve those broad goals. Two related concepts are also reflected in these partnerships. First, comprehensive supports require collaboration among different entities at the community, neighborhood, and even individual-case levels; it follows that the terms of the state/community partnership must enable rather than obstruct collaboration at the local level. Second, creating and sustaining comprehensive systems requires support and commitment among service providers, policy makers, and citizens at every level; therefore, new collaborative governance structures are needed in state and federal governments as well as communities.

The statutes vary in the ways and extent to which they incorporate these principles. For example, both the California Youth Pilot Programs Statute and the Oregon Child and Family Services Commission Act (a related bill to the Benchmarks Act) create broad-based community governance boards to design and administer a wide range of child and family services. The California statute sets rather broad guidelines for the specific services that local governing bodies must oversee (at least four service categories out of fifteen specified in the statute), but is quite specific about who must participate in those bodies (at least the county superintendent of schools, county officials for any agencies participating in the pilot programs, a juvenile court representative, and representatives for local service providers and public employee unions). In contrast, the Oregon statute is quite specific about the services that should be planned and coordinated by local interagency councils, but more flexible about the membership of those councils.

The statutes in this sample also vary in the level at which they create community authority. The Virginia Comprehensive Services Act, for example, requires local governance bodies to operate at the county level, while the Iowa Decategorization Statute allows for local governance by some municipalities and by consortia of counties. Similarly, the federal Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) Initiative establishes local governing boards that adhere to neighborhood boundaries, even if they straddle jurisdictional borders, while the federal Family Preservation and Support Services (FPSS) Program requires the creation of state-level interagency governance bodies.

There does not appear to be any reason to categorically prefer one model of local governance over another. The different approaches described above are largely explained by the existing governance structures in place in different settings. For example, the federal community and economic development programs participating in the EZ/EC initiative are currently organized to deal directly with community-level organizations, while the child welfare programs participating are required by law to deal only with a single, statewide agency in every state. Trying to adopt the same local governance framework for both initiatives would create unnecessary dislocation and confusion during the implementation phase. The legislative examples examined here indicate that local governance structures should not be assessed against a single "best" approach, but rather on their ability to support flexible, responsive, community-driven support systems.

Achieving Measurable Results

Most of the examples (24 out of 31) include some element of results measurement or accountability. This reflects strong interest in finding some way to objectively demonstrate to policy makers and the public that service and support systems are working. There are, however, some major obstacles to be overcome, such as: selecting appropriate goals; finding measurable indicators that accurately reflect those goals; setting realistic, achievable performance targets; linking results to programs or interventions that can reasonably be expected to impact them; and determining the costs and benefits of achieving specific goals.

While most of the examples address the identification and measurement of outcome goals, only a handful adopt explicit outcome goals in the legislation itself (the EZ/EC and Youth Development Community Block Grant Acts at the federal level; the California Healthy Start, Minnesota, Oregon, and West Virginia statutes at the state level). The federal Education for the Handicapped Amendments of 1986 (P.L. 99-457) and the Florida Early Intervention and Prevention Statute represent an older and somewhat different avenue to results accountability: creating a system of individualized service plans that must include service goals for each family, rather than a community or statewide plan that sets goals for the system as a whole. In the area of education reform, some statutes create new accountability mechanisms at several levels simultaneously: the Kentucky Education Reform Act and the combination of the federal Goals 2000 and Improving America's Schools Acts establish new student assessments that serve as the basis of results accountability for schools, school districts, and states.

Much more typical are the Georgia and North Carolina statutes, which delegate the identification of outcome goals and measurements to interagency executive boards or the federal Local Empowerment and Flexibility Act and the Iowa, Texas, and Virginia statutes, which require community governing bodies to define and track outcome measures of their choosing. These examples reflects the view that local officials and service providers are best suited to identifying local needs and priorities. It is worth noting, however, that communities often need time and assistance to implement results accountability.

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For example, during the implementation of the Comprehensive Services Act, Virginia's localities have expressed much interest in results measurement, but are likely at least in the initial stages to focus their attention and research efforts on more immediate questions of governance and financial management. To some extent, the challenges of results accountability are technical issues that can be alleviated through capacity-building measures, such as building comprehensive management information systems and developing improved techniques for program evaluation and cost-benefit analysis. As initiatives like these continue to grow and develop across the country, they should continue to experiment with new approaches to results measurement and accountability.

Reforming Systems of Governance

The thrust of the governance changes in most of these examples is toward improving coordination of services across existing system boundaries, and broadening the involvement of private and community interests in the design of programs and policies.

Coordination and integration: Coordination of programs and services may be applied horizontally (across different service systems at the local, state, or national level) or vertically (across different levels of government and the private sector, within one or more separate service systems).

- Horizontal coordination typically involves aligning the program priorities, plans, rules, and budgets of separate programs that serve the same populations or closely related needs. The New York State Council on Children and Families is an attempt at horizontal coordination at the state level, while Alabama's Children's Services Facilitation Teams try to achieve horizontal coordination at the individual-case level.

- Vertical coordination typically involves realigning responsibilities within a service system; frequently, this means devolving decision making authority to lower administrative levels. Kentucky's Education Reform Act represents a type of vertical coordination, in that decisions about instructional practices are devolved from the state education agency to schools and districts.

- Vertical and horizontal coordination are frequently undertaken simultaneously as part of a state/community partnership—the Iowa Decategorization Statute, the Virginia Comprehensive Services Act, the Georgia Policy Council Act, the California Healthy Start Act, and Ohio's Family and Children First Statute are good examples.

Some statutes go beyond this kind of coordination to formally integrate programs that serve related needs, combining the programs into a single program or funding source that is more comprehensive and flexible. The federal Youth Development Community Block Grant Act integrates several funding sources for state and local programs; the Virginia statute combines nine state funding sources into a single pool for the use of community-based collaboratives; and the Nebraska Partnership for Human Services Act integrates several separate state agencies into a new network of three closely coordinated agencies.

Public/private partnerships: Many of the legislative efforts studied also emphasize creating public/private partnerships. While legislation tends to focus on service systems that are dominated by the public sector (education, child welfare, juvenile justice, etc.), it can also create mechanisms to involve private-sector entities and individuals in the planning, oversight, and even delivery of services in the new system. Most of the bills that establish new governing boards or councils—including those in Georgia, Ohio, Minnesota, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington—require that business and community leaders sit on the boards, at either the state level, the local level, or both levels. In Georgia, involving business leaders in the governance of child and family services is an explicit goal of the initiative, while the New York Settlement House statute is expressly designed to build a statewide network of comprehensive, community-based private agencies that can serve as partners to public agencies.

The motives for these partnerships are as varied as their approaches and emphases. Some seek to harness the energy, resourcefulness, and innovative spirit of the private sector; some attempt to leverage public funds by attracting private funding from donors, businesses, or philanthropies; some are designed to broaden public support for child and family services by soliciting ideas and input from more members of society; and many are able to capitalize on all of these advantages.

Family involvement and participation: Several of these examples attempt to involve parents and family representatives directly in the process of designing and administering support systems for families. In most cases, this means ensuring that parents, family members, or caregivers are included in the memberships of new community-level governing boards. Such examples include federal statutes like the Community-based Family Resource Program Amendments and the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, and state statutes like Florida's Prevention and Early Assistance Statute, Georgia's Policy Council for Children and Families Act, Maryland's Systems Reform Initiative, Minnesota's Family Services and Community-based Collaboratives, North Carolina's Smart Start Program, Ohio's Family and Children First Statute, Texas' Child and Youth Partnerships Act, and Virginia's Comprehensive Services Act.

Many advocates of comprehensive reform regard parental or family participation as the single most critical element in building sustainable, effective support systems for families. Family participation has the potential not only to help identify the most appropriate priorities for children in a given community, but also to create a constituency for reform. Such a constituency can provide the essential foundation on which new systems and structures can be built. Yet, for the most part, it appears too early to tell how successful the family participation efforts in these examples have been. The examples cited here have not yet achieved a scale sufficient to conclude what political or programmatic impacts family participation has had on the reform effort. This is clearly an area in which more research and experimentation are warranted.

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Reforming Systems of Financing

Several of the initiatives examined here include flexible funding arrangements that are designed to remove barriers to collaboration and integration of service delivery. For example, the California, Iowa, and Virginia initiatives allow localities to combine funds from various categorical sources into a single pool, which they can use flexibly to address the service needs they identify for their communities. The EZ/EC, FPSS, and Kentucky Education Reform initiatives provide funds through new categorical programs, but design those programs to be more flexible than traditional funding sources. Some statutes—notably those of California's Youth Pilot Programs, Iowa's Decategorization Projects, and Virginia's Comprehensive Services Act—provide funding flexibility to enable communities to shift resources from costly remediation of problems (e.g., out-of-home placements) to preventive programs that address these problems at lower cost (e.g., family support, preservation, and reunification programs). And several statutes, including the North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia bills, provide an incentive for reforms by offering "seed money" or transitional assistance for communities that are adopting new governance systems. These flexible arrangements and incentives are an invaluable support to community-level planning and can help make the service and support system as a whole more adaptable and responsive.

However, these arrangements pose significant challenges for financial managers. In California and Virginia, for example, the pilot counties are experiencing a great deal of confusion and complexity in accounting for pooled funds. As they decide what funding sources they want to include in their funding pools, the counties have found that in some cases they do not collect some financial information that could help them make those decisions. As new funding sources are added to their pools, the counties have had to change their accounting systems and financial reports. With no designated budget for the project, and scarce technical assistance resources to offer the pilot counties, the California Department of Social Services is facing demands for more help with financial management issues, including many with which the Department itself is still struggling.

Legislation that adopts flexible funding arrangements may be able to address some of these implementation issues by providing financial management assistance to the entities that must adapt to this new system. North Carolina, for example, is providing new decategorized funding in addition to authority to pool funds from other sources. Another approach to this issue is that used by Iowa: by offering counties the opportunity to adopt flexible funding, rather than imposing it on them, the legislation gave counties an opportunity to develop their financial management capacity before electing to make the transition.

Building Administrative and Management Capacity

Several statutes attempt to build new "platform systems" to support other comprehensive reforms. The federal Family Preservation and Support Services Act and the Missouri Coordinated Information Systems Statute represent one important category of such activity. In a comprehensive support system, service providers, policy makers, and legislators must be able to share vast amounts of reliable information and communicate with one another frequently. Comprehensive automated information systems, like the statewide automated child welfare information systems (SACWIS) initiative and the integrated system called for in the Missouri statute, can address those needs. Such information systems are costly, however, and frequently run into conflicts with existing rules and regulations concerning the confidentiality of information. The FPSS Act and the Missouri statute represent attempts to deal with these issues through legislation.

States and communities making the transition to a new system also need a great deal of technical assistance, particularly in handling assessments of needs, measuring and tracking results, and evaluating programs. The FPSS Act, Goals 2000, and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act provide such assistance to states from the federal government; Georgia's Policy Council, North Carolina's Partnership for Children, and Washington's Family Policy Council provide assistance to localities from the state level.

In some states, building community capacity requires not just the right technical tools, but education on the challenges of collaboration. Collaborative decision making is typically more difficult and time-consuming, at least initially, than in the current fragmented system. And recent years have seen so many attempts at collaboration in so many different settings that local leaders and service providers may see a new community-based governing body as yet another add-on to the current system, rather than as a vehicle for entirely new ways of doing business. States may find it prudent to provide targeted assistance to communities on the particular challenges and opportunities that accompany collaboration. For example, Ohio's Family and Children First Cabinet has assembled an action team of executives loaned from eight state agencies to help communities build their capacity for change.

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Emerging Themes

1 The legislation examined here both reflects and embodies an **ongoing process of devolution**. Decision making and programmatic leadership are shifting from the federal government to states and communities. Although this shift is producing considerable diversity in legislative and programmatic approaches, there is an observable convergence among most states on some key elements of reform: community partnerships, results accountability, more flexible funding arrangements, and both vertical and horizontal integration of services.

2 The most recent pieces of legislation have placed a **heavy emphasis on community governance**. Many of the examples cited here focus on creating community-level governance structures, and empowering them to design and develop their own local systems. Among the many examples are the EZ/EC Act, the Local Empowerment and Flexibility Act, California's Youth Pilot Projects, the Georgia Policy Council Act, the Iowa Decategorization Statute, the Minnesota Family Services and Community-based Collaboratives, North Carolina's Smart Start Initiative, Ohio's Family and Children First Statute, the Texas Youth Partnerships Act, the Virginia Comprehensive Services Act, and Washington's Public Health and Safety Networks. One example, the Nebraska Partnership for Human Services Act, takes a somewhat different approach to this by focusing first on restructuring governance at the state level, but its explicit long-term goal is developing community governance capacity. And the education reform statutes among this sample, including the Goals 2000 Act, the Improving America's Schools Act, and the Kentucky Education Reform Act, all include measures to give local education agencies and even individual schools more flexibility and latitude to design their own educational programs and practices, while holding them more strongly accountable for improving student achievement. The desire to create community-level governance capability that crosses programmatic and system boundaries is perhaps the strongest common element that emerges from this sample.

It is worth noting, however, that this approach is not without its critics. The Texas Youth Partnerships, for example, drew such heavy criticism from some quarters that the bill did not pass the state Senate, and the Oregon Legislative Assembly did not approve a bill last year that would have expanded the authority and autonomy of the county child and family councils. Legislation may be able to address some criticisms of state/community partnerships by ensuring that new local governance structures will be directly accountable to local people, and by stating that community boards and the programs they administer will not usurp parents' rightful authority over their children.

3 The set of legislation analyzed here indicates that legislators and policy makers are extremely interested in developing **accountability for results**, but are also highly uncertain about how to proceed. Several examples set broad goals for children and families or for individual service and support systems (e.g., the Goals 2000 Act and the Kentucky, Minnesota, Oregon, and West Virginia statutes), and many include mechanisms to develop goals, indicators, or performance measures at either the state,

local, or individual-case level. Two statutes, the Kentucky Education Reform Act and the Improving America's Schools Act, go beyond the development of goals and indicators to link funding directly to measurable improvements in results. But, as illustrated by Virginia's difficulties in implementing results measurement with its localities, most governing bodies are not yet ready to implement ambitious results-accountability schemes. There is a clear need for more and better models of assessing needs, identifying goals and measurable indicators, and tracking results that are clearly connected to program activities and services.

Beyond the need to identify appropriate outcomes and measure them accurately, legislators should also consider how to incorporate shared accountability into new support systems for families. In the current service system, each program is held accountable only for certain results that are specific to their task (e.g., schools are responsible for reducing dropout rates, health programs for reducing infant mortality, child protection programs for reducing the prevalence of child abuse). In a comprehensive, community-based system, all elements of the system must share accountability for achieving results. All of the system's stakeholders therefore must recognize that the results they seek are affected by all of the system's components, and that affecting them requires coordinated actions across the entire system. Yet even when these basic ideas of shared accountability have taken root, it is rarely clear how they should be implemented. There is currently no preferred method for holding a collaborative entity, rather than an individual agency, responsible for results. Legislators should therefore give community governing bodies some flexibility to develop their own approaches to shared accountability, as well as targeted assistance with this complicated set of issues.

4 Some of these statutes place a strong emphasis on **controlling the costs of child and family services**, especially the costs of residential care facilities for seriously troubled children. In both Iowa and Virginia, one of the main arguments in favor of system reform was that more comprehensive services could make it possible to care for these children in their families, at lower cost and with no loss in safety or support for the child. Both states had seen sharp increases in their costs for foster care just prior to the enactment of the legislation. In both states, it was expected that reform would shift children and resources away from residential care and into family-based care, as well as slow the growth of overall costs for child and family services. Both states have in fact seen a shift of resources into family- and community-based services, and neither have detected any worsening in the safety and well-being of children.

But the states have seen different results when it comes to residential care placements and overall costs. The decategorized counties in Iowa have generally succeeded in slowing the growth of spending and reducing placements in foster care and residential care. But in Virginia, costs have continued to grow rapidly. Costs per child served have gone down slightly, because a higher proportion of children in the system receive low-cost community-based services rather than high-cost residential placements. But the number of children receiving the new community-based services has increased so substantially that it has more than offset the savings in costs per child. Program officials in Virginia are trying to determine whether this increase in costs is the result of excessive or inappropriate referrals to community-based services, or insufficient efforts to decrease the number of residential care placements, or some more intractable combination of factors. It is too early to say whether costs in Virginia will continue to grow rapidly or whether the shift to family-based services will eventually slow that growth. And in both Iowa and Virginia, it is unclear what the long-term impacts of the shift to family-based care will be for children and families.

These examples indicate that comprehensive reforms, even when they succeed in making service systems more effective and comprehensive, can have unforeseen and highly variable impacts on overall public spending. Any forecasts of those impacts should therefore be treated with great caution. Where legislators feel it necessary to incorporate estimates of cost savings into their reform legislation, they should use the most conservative estimates available, closely monitor the extent to which those savings are actually being achieved, and provide contingency funds to ensure that unexpected cost overruns do not derail the process of implementing reforms. Comprehensive reform should be regarded as a long-term process of improving support systems for families, rather than as a vehicle for short-term cost savings.

5 These statutes are firmly rooted in a **long-term development process** that began prior to the legislation and is expected to continue growing and changing after its enactment. For example, the Nebraska Partnership for Health and Human Services Act is designed to set the stage for far-reaching reforms rather than raise the curtain on them. The statute grows out of a year-long re-examination of the state's health policies directed by Lt. Gov. Kim Roback, and the Partnership's primary goal for this year is the development of a detailed implementation plan, which is likely to include a second legislative package. The Kentucky Education Reform Act, in contrast, is a voluminous and highly detailed piece of legislation that replaced in one stroke the entire body of state law concerning education, but it, too, was conceived as the beginning of a long-term process. The sponsors and supporters of the Act made it clear that they expected a lengthy implementation process of five years or more simply to enact the reforms, and that the benefits of the reforms might not become apparent until a decade or more had passed. This forthrightness helped to strengthen support for their approach and develop reasonable expectations for the reform process. These examples reflect the idea that, whether legislation is used to create incremental changes or sweeping reforms, it should be seen as one element in a long-term and multi-faceted restructuring effort.

Attachment A: Major Elements of Comprehensive Legislation Addressed in Thirty-one Legislative Examples

Part 1: Federal Legislation

Bill or Statute (Familiar Title)	**Building State/ Community Partnerships**	**Achieving Measurable Results**	**Reforming Systems of Governance**	**Reforming Systems of Financing**	**Building Administrative & Management Capacity**
Community-based Family Resource Program Amendments	■	●	■	■	
Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986	■	●	■		
Empowerment Zones/ Enterprise Communities Act	■	■	■	■	■
Family Preservation and Support Services Act	■	●		■	■
Goals 2000: The Educate America Act	■	■	■		■
Improving America's Schools Act of 1994	■	●	■		■
Local Empowerment and Flexibility Act	■	●	■	■	
School-to-Work Opportunities Act	■	●	■	■	
Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act	■		■		■
Youth Development Community Block Grant Act	■	■	■	■	

■ Addressed in legislation

● No results goals specified in legislation; measured results are to be determined by states and/or communities.

Part 2: State Legislation

Bill or Statute (Familiar Title)	Building State/ Community Partnerships	Achieving Measurable Results	Reforming Systems of Governance	Reforming Systems of Financing	Building Administrative & Management Capacity
Alabama Children's Services Facilitation Statute	■		■	■	
California Healthy Start Support Services for Children Act	■	■	■	■	
California Youth Pilot Programs	■	●		■	■
Florida Prevention and Early Assistance Statute	■	●	■		■
Georgia Policy Council for Children and Families Act	■	●	■	■	■
Iowa Decategorization Initiative	■	●	■	■	
Kentucky Education Reform	■	■	■	■	■
Maryland Systems Reform Initiative—Interagency Budgeting Statute	▲		▲	■	■
Minnesota Family Services and Community-based Collaboratives	■	■	■	■	
Missouri Coordinated Information System Statute					■
Nebraska Partnership Project	▼	▼	■	▼	■
New York Settlement House Statute	■				■
New York State Council on Children and Families			■		■
North Carolina Smart Start Program	■	●	■	■	■

■ Addressed in legislation.

● No outcome goals specified in legislation; outcomes are to be determined by entities in the state government and/or communities.

▲ The Interagency Budgeting Statute is one element of Maryland's ongoing Systems Reform Initiative (SRI). Other components of this initiative address building state/community partnerships and reforming systems of governance.

▼ The Nebraska Partnership Project will address these issues in subsequent legislation.

Bill or Statute (Familiar Title)	Building State/ Community Partnerships	Achieving Measurable Results	Reforming Systems of Governance	Reforming Systems of Financing	Building Administrative & Management Capacity
Children First Statute	■	●	■	■	■
Oregon Benchmarks	◆	■	■		
Texas Child and Youth Partnerships Act	■	●	■	■	■
Texas Childrens Trust Fund Statute			■	■	
Virginia Comprehensive Services Act	■	●	■	■	■
Washington Public Health and Safety Networks Statute	■	●	■	■	■
West Virginia Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families	■	■	■	■	■

■ Addressed in legislation.

● No outcome goals specified in legislation; outcomes are to be determined by entities in the state government and/or communities.

◆ The Oregon Benchmarks Act serves as the basis for state/community partnerships in the areas of child and family services, workforce development, and education.

Attachment B: Legislative Citations

Federal Legislation

Community-based Family Resource Program Amendments: S. 2000, Acts of 103rd Congress; Public Law 103-252, Section 401 or 42 U.S. Code, Section 5116.

Education of the Handicapped Act (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) Amendments of 1986-Handicapped Infants and Toddlers: H.R. 5520, Acts of 99th Congress; Public Law 99-457, Section 101 or 20 U.S. Code, Sections 1471 to 1485. Enacted 10/08/86.

Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) Act: Public Law 103-66, Part 1, Section 13301. Enacted 08/01/93.

Family Preservation and Support Services Act: Public Law 103-66, Part 1, Section 13711 or 42 U.S. Code, Section 629, Parts (a) - (d). Enacted 08/01/93.

Goals 2000: The Educate America Act: H.R. 1804 and S. 846, Acts of 103rd Congress, First Session; Public Law 103-227 or 20 U.S. Code, various sections.

Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965): H.R. 6, Acts of 103rd Congress; Public Law 103-382, Title 1 or 20 U.S. Code, various sections.

Local Empowerment and Flexibility Act: H.R. 2086, Acts of 104th Congress. Introduced 07/20/95. No legislative action.

School-to-Work Opportunities Act: H.R. 2884, Acts of 103rd Congress; Public Law 103-239 or 20 U.S. Code, various sections. Enacted 10/01/93.

Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act: Public Law 103-322. Enacted 10/01/94.
Youth Development Community Block Grant (YDCBG) Act: S. 673, Acts of the 104th Congress. Introduced 04/04/95. No legislative action.

State Legislation

Alabama Children's Services Facilitation Statute: 1993 Acts of Alabama Legislature, No. 93-256; codified as Code of Alabama 1975, Title 12, Chapter 15, Article 9.

California Healthy Start Support Services for Children Act: S.B. 620 or Chapter 759, Statutes of 1991; codified as California Education Code, Part 6, Chapter 5, Sections 8800 - 8807. Enacted 10/09/91.

California Youth Pilot Programs: A.B. 1741 or Chapter 951, Statutes of 1993; codified as California Welfare and Institutions Code, Division 9, Part 6, Chapter 12.85. Introduced 03/25/93. Enacted 10/11/93.

Florida Prevention and Early Assistance Statute: Codified as Florida Statutes, Sections 411.221 and 411.222. Enacted 10/01/89.

Georgia Policy Council for Children and Families Act: S.B. 256, 1995 Acts of Georgia; codified as Official Code of Georgia, Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 5, Sections 250-264. Enacted 07/01/95.

Iowa Decategorization Statute: H.F. 2480, 1992 Iowa Acts; codified as Code of Iowa, Section 232.188. Enacted 07/01/92.

Kentucky Education Reform Act: H.B. 940, 1990 Acts of Kentucky; codified as numerous sections in the Code of Kentucky. Enacted 03/29/90; implemented 07/13/90.

Maryland Systems Reform Initiative—Interagency Budgeting Statute: H.B. 1233 or 1994 Acts of Maryland General Assembly, Chapter 735; codified as Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 49D, Section 4.2. Enacted 05/26/94.

Minnesota Family Services and Community-Based Collaboratives: H.F. 350 or 1993 Acts of Minnesota Legislature, Chapter 224, Article 4, Section 10; codified as Laws of Minnesota, Section 121.8355. Enacted 05/17/93.

Missouri Coordinated Information System Statute: H.B.s 174, 325, and 326, Missouri Laws of 1995, Section A (Section 5); codified as Missouri Statutes, Section 210.865.

Nebraska Partnership for Health and Human Services Act: L.B. 1044, 1995 Acts of Nebraska; codified as Nebraska Revised Statutes, Sections 81-3001 through 81-3307. Introduced 01/04/96. Enacted 04/03/96.

New York Settlement House Statute: New York Laws of 1993, Chapter 59, Section 78; codified as Consolidated Laws of New York, Social Services Law, Section 482.

New York State Council on Children and Families: New York Laws of 1977, Chapter 757, Section 1; codified as Consolidated Laws of New York, Executive Law, Section 444. Enacted 10/01/77 and subsequently amended in 1979, 1982, 1983, 1985, and 1990.

North Carolina Smart Start Program: North Carolina Laws of 1993 Chapter 321, Senate Bill 27; codified as General Statutes of North Carolina, Chapter 143-B, Article 3. Introduced 04/01/93. Enacted 07/09/93.

Ohio Family and Children First Statute: H. 117, Ohio Statutes of 1995; codified as Ohio Revised Code, Section 121.37. Enacted 09/29/95.

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Oregon Benchmarks Act: S.B. 636, Oregon Acts of 1991; codified as Oregon Revised Statutes, 184.007 and Notes. Introduced 05/22/91. Enacted 06/07/91

Texas Child and Youth Partnerships Act: H.B. 1409, Bills of 74th Texas Legislature; not codified. Introduced 02/17/95. Approved by the House of Representatives on 03/28/95. Withdrawn from Senate legislative calendar 05/26/95. Most of the provisions in this bill, except Section 1 (Local Child and Family Commissions), were subsequently enacted as H.B. 1, Texas Legislature Bills of 1995.

Texas Children's Trust Fund Statute: Acts of the 69th Texas Legislature, Chapter 420, Section 1; codified as Texas Human Resources Code, Section 74.001 et seq. Enacted 09/01/85.

Virginia Comprehensive Services Act: S.B. 171, ch. 837 / H.B. 935, Chapter 880 of 1992 Acts of Assembly; codified as Code of Virginia, Division 2.1, various sections. Enacted 07/01/92.

Washington Public Health and Safety Networks Statute: H.B. 2319, 1994 Acts of Washington Legislature; codified as Code of Washington Annotated, Title 70, Chapter 190.

West Virginia Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families: West Virginia Acts of 1990, 3rd Ex. Session, c.4; codified as Code of Virginia, Chapter 5, Article 26, Sections 1-8. Enacted 08/30/90.

Additional Resources: Background on Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems and Components of the Sample Legislation

Contents

A guide to references and further information related to the topic areas presented in the sample legislation.

General Background 5-1

An Overview: Comprehensive Support Systems—What they are, How they are Useful, and Select Examples 5-2

The Current Status of Children, Families, and Community Services 5-3

Governance and Finance Systems to Support State/Local Partnerships 5-5

Methods for Defining a Vision, Results and Indicators, and Performance Measures 5-8

Evaluation Strategies for Comprehensive Support Systems 5-9

Management Information Systems: Data Collection and Sharing 5-9

Other Resources 5-11

Additional Resources: Background on Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems and Components of the Sample Legislation

General Background

Bruner, Charles
Realizing a Vision for Children, Families, and Neighborhoods: An Alternative to Other Modest Proposals
Provides a discussion of the well-being of children and neighborhoods, and lays out some of the causes of poor social outcomes—causes that are well-known and accepted, such as unprepared parents and disinvested neighborhoods. Identifies "conditions of success," and reviews some of the necessary conditions and capacity-building steps that must take place to empower the delivery of more effective supports for children and families.
The National Center for Service Integration. Available through the National Child and Family Policy Center: 1021 Fleming Building, 218 Sixth Avenue, DesMoines, IA 50309-4006; 515/280-9027. (1996)

Gardner, John
Building Community
Defines "community" and the differing attributes of traditional and more modern communities. Reviews historical causes for the breakdown of communities, and methods for their regeneration—for moving a group of community members with shared qualities toward greater unity. Outlines the ingredients of community—diversity, shared values, trust, communication, participation, affirmation, etc.—and presents strategies for getting beyond fragmentation to cohesiveness.
Independent Sector: 1828 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036; 202/223-8100. Available through Independent Sector Publications: P.O. Box 451, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701; 301/490-3229. (1991)

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An Overview: Comprehensive Support Systems—What they are, How they are Useful, and Select Examples

Center for the Study of Social Policy
Systems Change at the Neighborhood Level: Creating Better Futures for Children, Youth, and Families
Describes neighborhood support networks and outlines nine key characteristics of these systems of support. Provides three examples of neighborhood initiatives, each of which represents a different approach to meeting neighborhood needs. Based on these examples, four lessons are presented to help policy makers create effective neighborhood support systems.
Center for the Study of Social Policy: 1250 Eye Street, NW, Suite 503, Washington, DC 20005; 202/371-1565. (1996)

Dryfoos, Joy G.
Full-service Schools: A Revolution in Health and Social Services for Children, Youth, and Families
Provides a vision for effective delivery of health and social services for children and families: through full-service schools. Full-service schools provide services other than schooling—health care and other family services—at the school site, often linking delivery strategies as well as location. Examples of both historical precedents to full-service schools, and current attempts to provide services through methods such as these are provided. The current status and options for financing these systems of service delivery are addressed, because securing funding is one of the largest barriers to replicating these systems. Appendices include twelve examples of states that support school-based services, and a listing of potential sources of federal funding for similar reform efforts.
Jossey-Bass Publishers: 350 Sansome Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94014; 415/433-1740. (1994)

Hayes, Cheryl D., Elise Lipoff, Anna E. Danegger
Compendium of Comprehensive, Community-based Initiatives: A Look at Costs, Benefits, and Financing Strategies
Reviews 50 comprehensive, community initiatives to document what is known about their costs, their results and achievements, and the ways in which they are financed. Although not exhaustive, the review describes initiatives that are representative of countless other efforts underway in communities across the country. The findings highlight a number of themes and issues that have implications for future research and development.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1995)

Kagan, Sharon L., with Peter R. Neville
Integrating Human Services: Understanding the Past to Shape the Future:
Provides an overview of service integration efforts—beginning with historical governance decisions and structures, and continuing on to analyze recent attempts to integrate service delivery. Draws upon this

historical framework to provide a stage for evaluating current service integration efforts and devising new strategies for the future. Examines the many forms that service integration takes—including co-location, integrated management information systems, coordinated planning and programming, and collaborative financing—and the vastly different definitions that are used to describe these arrangements. Addresses barriers and incentives to implementation, and recommendations for future work.
Yale University Press: Customer Service, 92A Yale Station, New Haven CT 06520; 800/987-7323. In cooperation with The National Center for Service Integration. (1993)

Kagan, Sharon L., Stacie G. Goffin, Sarit A. Golub, Eliza Pritchard
Toward Systemic Reform: Service Integration for Young Children and Their Families
Examines service integration efforts in four states. Evaluates implementation processes according to six priority factors: domain, level (state and local roles), approach, financing, leadership, and involvement (soliciting non-governmental support). Defines results for service integration through both systemic accomplishments and human outcomes. Draws implications for action. Includes an appendix detailing the experiences of Colorado, Florida, Indiana, and Oregon.
The National Center for Service Integration, Resource Brief 2. Available through the National Child and Family Policy Center: 1021 Fleming Building, 218 Sixth Avenue, DesMoines, IA 50309-4006; 515/280-9027. (1995)

The Current Status of Children, Families, and Community Services

Annie E. Casey Foundation
Kids Count Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well-Being
Tracks annually the status of child risk and well-being in the United States through the use of ten indicators, ranking states' performances in each area. National and state profiles list each indicator, as well as background information such as demographic statistics and social characteristics. A list of primary contacts for state *Kids Count* projects is also included in this national publication.
Annie E. Casey Foundation: 701 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202; 410/547-6600. (Annual)

Children's Defense Fund
The State of America's Children: Yearbook 1996
Provides an overview of the status of children, touching on issues of equality and the role of federal support. Reviews in detail the status of children as determined by: income and poverty; child health; child care and early childhood development; education; adolescent pregnancy and youth development; violence; and the occurrence of crisis situations for children. The appendix tracks relevant data for these areas of importance, both at the federal level and at the individual state levels.
Children's Defense Fund: 25 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001; 202/628-8787. (Annual)

Knitzer, Jane, Stephen Page
Map and Track: State Initiatives for Young Children and Families
Tracks state efforts to promote the healthy growth and development of young children. Reveals that eight states of the 37 supporting state-funded initiatives targeted to young children and their families implemented comprehensive support systems. Critical indicators of the well-being of young children and their families are included.
National Center for Children in Poverty: Columbia University School of Public Health, 154 Haven Avenue, New York, NY 10032; 212/927-9162. (1996)

Gold, Steven D., Deborah A. Ellwood, Elizabeth I. Davis, David S. Liebschutz, Sarah Ritchie, Martin E. Orland, Carol E. Cohen
State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: Fiscal Profiles of the 50 States
Presents state-by-state profiles of patterns of spending on education and other key health, welfare, and social services, and of the significant economic and demographic factors influencing spending. Taken together with *State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: Case Studies of Financing Innovations,* and *State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: The Fiscal Challenges Ahead,* it paints a vivid picture of the fiscal and budgetary challenges that states will face over the coming several years. These papers clarify a number of the critical policy and political issues that will confront governors, state legislatures, educators and others who run programs to serve children and their families. And they highlight a variety of nascent efforts in states nationwide to improve public financing for education and other children's services.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1995)

Orland, Martin E., Carol E. Cohen
State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: The Fiscal Challenges Ahead
Analyzes factors affecting spending and their future implications given the changing demographic, economic, and policy context. Taken together with *State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: Case Studies of Financing Innovations,* and *State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: Fiscal Profiles of the 50 States,* it paints a vivid picture of the fiscal and budgetary challenges that states will face over the coming several years. These papers clarify a number of the critical policy and political issues that will confront governors, state legislatures, educators and others who run programs to serve children and their families. And they highlight a variety of nascent efforts in states nationwide to improve public financing for education and other children's services.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1995)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Trends in the Well-Being of America's Children and Youth: 1996
Records national trends for 74 indicators of child well-being, broadly catagorized according to: population, family, and neighborhood; economic security; health conditions and care; social development,

behavioral health, and teen fertility; and education and achievement. Also discusses the trends and consequences of change in both population and characteristics of children and families.
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 450G, Washington, DC 20201; 202/690-0401. (1996)

Governance and Finance Systems to Support State/Local Partnerships

Center for the Study of Social Policy
Draft: A Legislative Strategy to Support Local Governance: A Background Paper for the Changing Governance: Strategies for Action Working Group
Presents a discussion of the changing state/local balance of power in an era of devolution. Finds new state legislation to be one of the necessary elements for a smooth transition to local decision making for human services. Outlines the specific role of legislation. Highlights key principles for new human services legislation, and the structures that need to exist to support its development and implementation.
Center for the Study of Social Policy: 1250 Eye Street, NW, Suite 503, Washington, DC 20005; 202/371-1565. (1996)

Center for the Study of Social Policy
Toward New Forms of Local Governance: A Progress Report from the Field
Outlines the meaning and importance of local governance and state/local partnerships, illustrating the inter-relationships between different levels of government and citizens. Provides a review of the progress and experiences of regions implementing new state/local government relationships, particularly relevant as states begin to receive more federal funds in the form of block grants. Integrates examples of specific experiences of states and localities related to five identified responsibilities of local governance.
Center for the Study of Social Policy: 1250 Eye Street, NW, Suite 503, Washington, DC 20005; 202/371-1565. (1996)

Cutler, Ira M.
The Role of Finance Reform in Comprehensive Service Initiatives
Examines strategies for financing a variety of community-based comprehensive services initiatives, with special attention to their applicability to major systems change. In addition, highlights a number of issues that decision makers will have to address in their efforts to successfully create comprehensive systems linking education and other children's services and strengthening community supports outside the mainstream of categorical services.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1994)

Cutler, Ira M., Alexandra Tan, Laura Downs
State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: Case Studies of State Innovations
Examines the experiences of seven states that have launched initiatives to improve financing. Taken together with *State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: The Fiscal Challenges Ahead*, and *State Investments in Education and Other Children's Services: Fiscal Profiles of the 50 States*, it paints a vivid picture of the fiscal and budgetary challenges that states will face over the coming several years. These papers clarify a number of the critical policy and political issues that will confront governors, state legislatures, educators and others who run programs to serve children and their families. And they highlight a variety of nascent efforts in states nationwide to improve public financing for education and other children's services.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200.
(1995)

Hayes, Cheryl D.
Financing Services for Young Children and Their Families: The Challenges of Welfare Reform
Outlines creative ways of raising public revenues for supports and services for young children and their families. Intended to help public officials and community program developers think about the strategies they will increasingly have to employ in order to fill revenue gaps to improve—or even maintain—the effectiveness and equity of child and family supports in the context of welfare reform.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200.
(Forthcoming: Winter 1996)

The Finance Project
Money Matters: A Guide to Financing Quality Education and Other Children's Services
Assists legislators, administrators, advocates, and others who are not necessarily expert in the details of finance in understanding and reforming the financing of education and other children's services. Outlines a set of interrelated principles that should guide any finance reform effort. Each chapter describes key issues, options, examples, and lists of relevant additional resources. The five topic areas addressed are: generating revenue; budgeting; developing intergovernmental partnerships; aligning incentives; and building public and political support for finance reform.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200.
(Forthcoming: Winter 1996)

Orland, Martin E., Anna E. Danegger, Ellen Foley
Creating More Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems: The Critical Role of Finance
Provides a guide to social service financing mechanisms for the non-expert, and an analysis of how those mechanisms can impede service delivery. With particular attention to the challenges and opportunities offered by the changing policy environment and the approaching federal block grant era, it also explores options for financing reforms that support comprehensive, community-based services for chil-

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dren and families. Reprinted with permission from *Integrated Services for Children and Families: Opportunities for Psychological Practice*, an edited volume in press at the American Psychological Association.

The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1995)

Orland, Martin E., Ellen Foley

Beyond Decategorization: Defining Barriers and Potential Solutions to Creating Effective Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children and Families

Examines the conditions that are likely to inhibit the development of effective comprehensive community-based service initiatives for children and families. Identifies policy directions, particularly at the state level, that appear to hold promise for overcoming these constraints. Through practitioners' views of operational barriers and potential solutions, it provides a greater understanding of both the promise and limitations of strategies for building more comprehensive and community-based support systems for children and their families.

The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1996)

Triplett, Thomas

Legal Issues and Constraints Affecting Finance Reform for Education and Related Services

Provides an examination of the federal and state constitutional and statutory issues that affect the capacity of governments to raise revenue for children's services, including mandates and key legislation which limit revenues, expenditures, and borrowing. One in a series of studies of systemic revenue generation issues for education and other children's services.

The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1995)

Woods, Thomas

Building Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children & Families: A Review of Legislative Examples

Examines a number of different pieces of federal and state legislation aimed at creating comprehensive, community-based support systems. Analyzes similarities, differences, and trends over time. (The analysis section is included in Tab 4 of this toolkit.). Includes descriptions of the individual legislative examples. Highlights the aspects of the examples that focus on building state/community partnerships, achieving measurable results, reforming systems of governance or finance, and building administrative and management capacity.

The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1996)

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Methods for Defining a Vision, Results and Indicators, and Performance Measures

Bruner, Charles, Karen Bell, Claire Brindis, Hedy Chang, William Scarbrough
Charting a Course: Assessing a Community's Strengths and Needs
Describes community assessment as both a product—a measure of the strengths and weaknesses of a community—and a process—a method to collect information. Outlines primary goals and a framework for conducting a community assessment. Identifies baseline information that should shape preliminary data collection objectives, and highlights the importance of informal citizen interaction when establishing partnerships. Finally, discusses the importance of linking information systems to results or goals. Examples are intermingled.
The National Center for Service Integration, Resource Brief 2. Available through the National Child and Family Policy Center: 1021 Fleming Building, 218 Sixth Avenue, DesMoines, IA 50309-4006; 515/280-9027. (1993)

Danegger, Anna E., Jason Juffras
A Guide to Children's Budgets
Provides an introduction to children's budgets—tools that provide a method for taking stock of the quantity of financial resources that serve children and their families, and that establish a framework for analyzing state or community allocation patterns. A number of different budgeting schemes are introduced, differing based on (1) their inclusiveness—do they include both public and private funds; (2) their origination—are they developed by a private organization, or are they institutionalized in agency budgeting processes, and (3) their organization—are budget items simply aggregated, or are they grouped by function or by intended results.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (Forthcoming: Winter 1996)

Friedman, Mark
A Strategy Map for Results-based Budgeting: Moving from Theory to Practice
Provides a road map for those embarking on the path of results-based budgeting. Defines results, indicators, and performance measures, and offers a framework for choosing them. Discusses lessons from state, local, and private initiatives to define, measure, and achieve results. Suggests how to build political and community support, how to reallocate resources and tie them to results, how to integrate results-based budgeting into an existing budget process, and how to avoid common pitfalls.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1996)

Friedman, Mark, Jason Juffras
A Guide to Developing and Using Performance Measures
Charts one critical path in the development of a results-based system: the selection of performance measures to assess contributions of public agencies toward achieving valued results or goals. Draws heavily on the experiences of federal, state, and local governments and presents a framework for evaluating the quality and usefulness of performance measurement. Intended to provide practical guidance to anyone

involved in designing a results-based system: elected and other public officials at the federal, state, and local levels; community, business, and other interest groups; and concerned citizens.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (Forthcoming: Winter 1996)

Melaville, Atelia
A Guide to Results and Indicators
Describes how to develop and define results and indicators to measure the levels of well-being that people seek for their nation, state, or community. Examines major federal, state, and local initiatives to define results and indicators, extracting lessons about citizen involvement, the characteristics of a sound results and indicators framework, and ways to link the results and indicators to planning, budgeting, management, and accountability. A companion to *A Guide to Developing and Using Performance Measures*, it is intended to provide practical guidance to anyone involved in designing a results-based system: elected and other public officials at the federal, state, and local levels; community, business, and other interest groups; and concerned citizens.
The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (Forthcoming: Winter 1996)

Evaluation Strategies for Comprehensive Support Systems

Connell, James P., Anne C. Kubisch, Lisbeth B. Schorr, Carol H. Weiss
New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods, and Contexts
Documents a number of reasons that comprehensive, community initiatives are difficult to evaluate—among others is complex organizational and administrative structures. Outlines promising evaluation strategies, addressing common methodological problems. Provides recommendations for increasing the success rate of evaluators' efforts.
The Aspen Institute, Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families: 345 East 40th Street, Suite 700, New York, NY 10017-3502; 212/697-1226. Available through the Publications Office, 109 Houghton Lab Lane, P.O. Box 222, Queenstown, MD 21658. (1995)

Management Information Systems: Data Collection and Sharing

Kraus, Allen, Jolie Bain Pillsbury
Making It Simpler: Streamlining Intake and Eligibility Systems
Describes the negative impact that complex, independent intake and eligibility systems have on the provision of comprehensive supports and services. Reviews some of the barriers to reforming intake and eligibility systems—systems that are necessary for providing comprehensive support systems to a client. Provides examples of policy, administrative, and technological changes that have been proven to simplify client intake experiences.
The National Center for Service Integration, Resource Brief 6. Available through the National Child and Family Policy Center: 1021 Fleming Building, 218 Sixth Avenue, DesMoines, IA 50309-4006; 515/280-9027. (1993)

Marzke, Carolyn, Deborah Both, James Focht

Information Systems to Support Comprehensive Human Services Delivery

Outlines the current capacity of information systems to support human services. Provides a prototype of comprehensive support systems' information needs. Identifies a process for moving toward systems reform, which includes tasks such as determining system scope. Reviews the "state of the field" and identifies challenges and opportunities that exist. Examines ten initiatives developing information systems to support comprehensive service delivery.

The National Center for Service Integration. Available through the National Child and Family Policy Center: 1021 Fleming Building, 218 Sixth Avenue, DesMoines, IA 50309-4006; 515/280-9027. (1994)

Rice, Jennifer King

Conceptualizing the Costs of Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children

Presents the rationale for developing new approaches to conceptualizing the costs associated with comprehensive, community-based support systems—both implementation and operation costs. Explores issues associated with these costs and provides a preliminary template to guide local policy makers and practitioners through a systematic consideration of the total and marginal costs of resources required to operate such initiatives.

The Finance Project: 1341 G Street, NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005; 202/628-4200. (1995)

Soler, Mark I., Clark M. Peters

Who Should Know What?: Confidentiality and Information Sharing in Service Integration

Presents background information for establishing shared information systems to enable the development of effective interagency collaborations. Reviews the importance of both protecting and sharing information, and the laws governing the transfer of client data. Outlines specific methods to facilitate information sharing, one of the largest barriers to creating comprehensive support systems.

The National Center for Service Integration, Resource Brief 3. Available through the National Child and Family Policy Center: 1021 Fleming Building, 218 Sixth Avenue, DesMoines, IA 50309-4006; 515/280-9027. (1993)

Sullivan, Candace, Jule Sugarman

Interagency Data Systems for Accountability

Identifies the need for new information systems, and the components that are key to creating data systems to support cross-agency or comprehensive support systems. Draws information from examples of state or local experiences with using data systems to support multi-program or multi-agency systems. Provides general cautionary notes for developers of new systems—for example, the importance of fostering realistic expectations for results-based accountability systems, or of collecting quality data. Appendices catalog federal legislation encouraging cross-sector collaboration, as well as specific examples of outcome-based efforts.

Council of Chief State School Officers: 1 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001-1431; 202/336-7016. (1995)

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Other Resources

Chaudry, Ajay, Karen E. Maurer, Carole J. Oshinsky, Joshua Mackie
Service Integration: An Annotated Bibliography
Provides annotated citations of works relating to methods for and experiences with unifying systems of human service delivery for children, youth, and families living in poverty.
The National Center for Service Integration. Available through the National Child and Family Policy Center: 1021 Fleming Building, 218 Sixth Avenue, DesMoines, IA 50309-4006; 515/280-9027. (1993)

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Other Resources Available from The Finance Project's Working Papers Series

Financing Comprehensive, Community-based Supports and Services

Building Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children & Families: A Review of Legislative Examples by Thomas Woods (November 1996)

Beyond Decategorization: Defining Barriers and Potential Solutions to Creating Effective Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children and Families by Martin E. Orland and Ellen Foley (April 1996)

Conceptualizing the Costs of Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems for Children by Jennifer King Rice (November 1995)

Creating More Comprehensive, Community-based Support Systems: The Critical Role of Finance by Martin E. Orland, Anna E. Danegger and Ellen Foley (November 1995)

Compendium of Comprehensive, Community-based Initiatives: A Look at Costs, Benefits and Financing Strategies by Cheryl D. Hayes, Elise Lipoff, and Anna E. Danegger (August 1995)

The Role of Finance Reform in Comprehensive Service Initiatives by Ira M. Cutler (December 1994)

Results-based Planning, Budgeting, Management, and Accountability Issues

Results-based Planning, Budgeting, Management, and Accountability Strategies: An Annotated Bibliography by Anna E. Danegger and Jason Juffras (November 1996)

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